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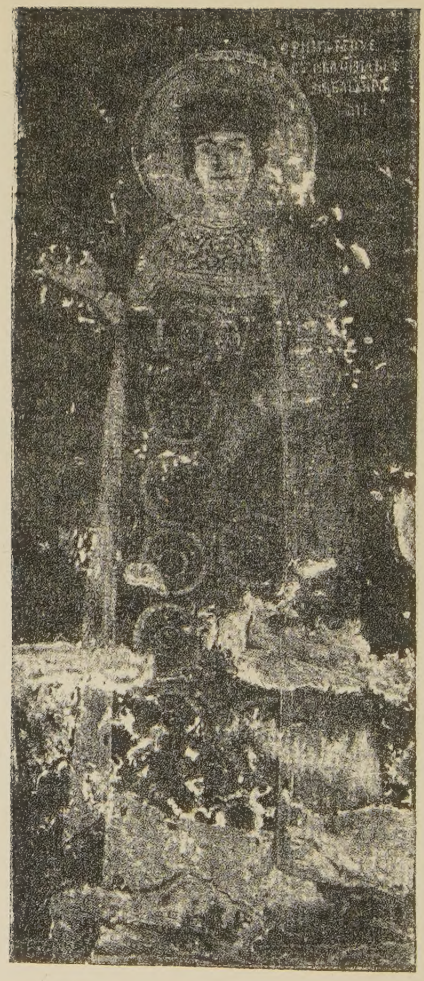

IRENE LASCARIS

DAUGHTER OF THEODOR II OF NICAEA

From a fresco in the Church of Boyana, near Sofia

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THE
LASCARIDS OF NICÆA

THE STORY OF AN EMPIRE IN EXILE

BY

ALICE GARDNER

WITH EIGHT ILLUSTRATIONS AND A MAP

ARGONAUT, INC., PUBLISHERS
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TO

EDWIN FRESHFIELD, Esq.

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PREFACE

THE object of this work is sufficiently set forth in the Introductory Chapter. It was undertaken in the belief that, as was said to me some years ago by an eminent historian, Byzantine History is still in the stage favourable to monographs. This particular episode—of a renowned Empire temporarily ousted from its rightful abode, recuperating its forces abroad, and finally recovering its own again, in virtue of its actual superiority over its rivals—has, I may say, always been attractive to me since, in early youth, I read the story in the pages of Gibbon. Thanks chiefly to the Munich school of Byzantine research, along with the labours of English, French, Italian, and Russian scholars, much material has been rendered accessible since Gibbon and even since Finlay wrote.

I have to render sincere thanks to friends and advisers who have helped and encouraged me during my work, especially to Professor J. B. Bury, who kindly approved my choice of subject and has since, from his very wide and minute knowledge, elucidated some difficult points; to Professor August Heisenberg of the Mediæval Greek School at Munich, who most kindly allowed me to read for a few weeks in the Seminar Library there and helped me much by conversation and by directions as to sources; to Dr Edwin Freshfield, whose kindness greatly

facilitated a holiday tour last year in Asia Minor, and to whom I also owe the photographs of Magnesia and of a Byzantine pillar here reproduced; to my nephew, Mr Leonard Reid, who accompanied me on my travels, for the photographs of Nymphæum and of Nicæa; to Miss Melian Stawell for much useful criticism, especially of the translations; to my brother, Professor Percy Gardner, of Oxford, and my colleague, Miss Louise Matthæi of Newnham College, for help in the correction of the proofs; to my friends, Mr and Mrs Constantine Mincoff, formerly of Sofia, now of the Bulgarian Legation in London, for showing me the frescoes of Boyana, and to Mr Balastcheff, of the Museum in Sofia, for very kindly letting me have material for reproducing some portraits from those frescoes; finally, to the Council and Associates of Newnham College, for enabling me, by the grant of a fellowship, to enjoy a period of comparative leisure from educational duties with a view to study and literary work.

Some friendly critics having suggested that I should give more of the *ipsissima verba* of my Byzantine authorities, I decided, considering the difficulty of making such insertions in the text, to translate a few short pieces illustrative of Byzantine style and thought, and print them in an appendix. I am fully aware of their imperfections, and hope they will be leniently received as an honest attempt to give an accurate if inadequate notion of the original.

ALICE GARDNER

CAMBRIDGE
June 1912

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THE LASCARIDS OF NICÆA

THE STORY OF AN EMPIRE IN EXILE

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

THE first half of the thirteenth century of our era is generally, and rightly, recognized as a period of great historical importance and attractiveness. Englishmen think of it as the time that included the signing of Magna Charta and the baronial resistance to papal claims, leading to the military opposition and later to the constitutional experiments of Simon de Montfort. In France we have the king who did more than any other, perhaps, to extend and strengthen the power of the monarchy, Philip Augustus (1177-1223), and the king who did more than any of his successors to give the throne a prestige, and even sanctity, which no republicanism or secularism can entirely efface, Louis IX. (1226-1270). In Germany there is the astonishing career of the "wonder of the world," Frederick II. (1212-1250), a man whose originality and intellectual boldness might mark him for unmediæval to those who do not recognize the rich variety of the Middle Ages in types of mind and character. In the Church there stands, at the beginning of the period,

the ablest, perhaps, and one of the most high-minded of all the Popes, Innocent III. (1198-1216), whose successors carry on a struggle, severe but not fruitless, to maintain the power and privileges of the Roman See. In Italy the struggles between Empire and Papacy are proving favourable to those municipal developments, especially of the maritime cities, which rapidly produced results of surpassing brilliance. In religion and philosophy we have the far-extending labours of Dominic and Francis, and the earlier careers of the mediæval investigator of nature, Roger Bacon, and of the founder of systematic theology, Thomas Aquinas.

It is the object of the following pages to show that this period, so fruitful for Western Europe in conspicuous men and monuments, was also one of distinction in the history of what is commonly and loosely known as The East. The neglect of Byzantine history has so often been made a subject of complaint in England during late years, that one hesitates to take up the monotonous lamentation. A great deal has lately been written and said about the high civilization of Byzantium at a time when our ancestors were crude in thought and untamed in life; our feelings for the old Greeks have been appealed to, as well as our sympathies for their depressed descendants of the present day. Still, it would seem that few people are much interested in the Eastern Empire (though the names of Gibbon, Finlay, Hodgkin, Pears, and Bury are sufficient to vindicate British scholarship on this count), and possibly the reason of the indifference is that the Eastern Empire seems so *remote*. Even the attempts to attract people to its study are liable to

leave a feeling of the grotesque and unusual. The extreme ceremoniousness of court and official life; the absence of anything like constitutional liberty; the scope allowed to the vagaries of eminent ladies; the different tone of morals, especially the higher consideration in which the more intellectual virtues are held, as compared with the standard (held if not followed) of Western chivalry;—all these traits seem to suggest that Byzantium forms a backwater in the stream of human progress rather than a part of the main current. But in fact, paradoxical as it may seem, in Byzantine history, irrespective of dates, some parts are less *remote* than others from the scientific student of history. Possibly if the more remote periods were adequately studied, we might find unsuspected influences or new illustrations of already known tendencies, which have helped to bring our civilization into the shape which it wears to-day. But the point on which I would here insist is that the subject of our present study is anything but remote from the history of civilization generally.

This statement may be immediately justified by the fact that some of the great men and monuments referred to as giving its character to our period in the West will occupy us in our study of the East. We shall have something to do with Innocent III. and later with Frederick II., and also with many of the French nobles who chafed under the increasing power of the monarchy. And—more important—we shall see a great deal of the strife between rival conceptions of Church and State, between ideas of Church unity and of political authority; and the forms which the problems took, with the partial, not generally acceptable,

solutions, are very instructive to the student whose knowledge of ecclesiastical conflicts has generally been limited to those of the Latin and Teutonic churches. But beyond all this is the really dramatic episode of an actual attempt consciously and intentionally made to bring the East out of her position of at least partial isolation: to reincorporate the Greek in the Roman Church, and to extend the feudal institutions of the West to lands still living under an imperial bureaucracy. The plan was never so complete as practically to include the idea of one universal Empire and one universal Church. But it did imply that some of the distinctive peculiarities of Eastern and Western life were to be considerably levelled down.

Now herein lies the great interest of the Lascarid Dynasty, and of their Empire, commonly called that " of Nicæa " ; though a territorial title, especially one connected with a temporary capital, seems ill-suited to what considered itself—and ultimately justified its claim to be considered—as the orderly continuation of the Empire of Augustus and Constantine. By the Fourth Crusade, in the early years of the thirteenth century, Latin Christianity, feudal notions of government and society, and all the apparatus of Western Mediævalism seemed to have triumphed over the Greek world, with its culture that went back to classical times and far beyond, its Church, which retained the tongue of the New Testament and the literature of the earliest and most philosophical of the Christian Fathers, and its splendid governmental structure, which had stood more storms than any structure known in history. The causes of the collapse will concern

us in the next two chapters. Here I would notice the importance of the fact that the collapse was not final. Constantinople was in due course recovered by her former rulers, and the Empire had one hundred and ninety years more of life, though of reduced power and prestige, before the fatal climax of 1453. Most students of the Middle Ages will agree that the putting-off of the evil day was more than a mere postponement. The years of respite were a clear gain to Hellenism, and enabled it to strike root into European society so as to survive spiritually when the last material and political supports were gone.

It may be said that I am exaggerating the greatness of the rôle of the Nicene princes, since the so-called Latin Empire of Constantinople could not even apart from them have maintained itself permanently, being without any of the fundamental principles of political stability. The Greeks would, in any case, have come by their own again. The Lascarids were the instrument, rather than the cause, of the recovery. And again there were, as we shall see, other notable Greek leaders who escaped from the general destruction to found some kind of state in other lands, free from Latin control or associations, and some of them ran the Lascarids at one time rather hard, and might, if circumstance had been a little different, have secured for themselves the credit of the restoration. But we would answer that whether instruments or causes, the Lascarids *did* establish and maintain the state which, in spite of all rivals, both upheld most conspicuously the old imperial prestige, and also, at the fitting, long-desired moment, recovered the ancient capital. That it was not a Lascarid, but a usurper, who

ultimately attained the goal does not affect the question. Michael Palæologus had been a subject of the Empire ruled from Nicæa, was connected by marriage with its ruler, and at the time of the actual recovery of Constantinople was nominally co-regent with a Lascarid prince whose succession was delayed by his extreme youth. At the same time, while the view here taken of the Nicene Empire is that it was *the* Empire in exile, due credit will be given to the various Hellenic princes who helped to stem the Latin tide. In this history the fact, only too familiar in the whole story of the Greek peoples, is again found: the rivalry of Greek with Greek which ever prevents them from presenting a united front to those whom they agree in regarding as "barbarians."

This is not merely a question of names, though names figure largely in it. The Lascarids had throughout a guiding idea which they pursued without intermission: the recovery of the natural capital of the Empire, the "Queen City" Constantinople. In their sayings and actions they keep it before the people. This does not imply that they cared little for the fair lands and cities in Asia over which they asserted their power, nor that they are beyond trying at times to establish a *modus vivendi* with the Latin rulers of Constantinople, or even contracting marriage alliances. Treaty negotiations, all through Greek history, have been consistent with a state of chronic war. The Nicene Emperors represent a cause, which they follow up by military and by diplomatic efforts.

The character of the Nicene rulers eminently fitted them for their task. We have—if we include

Michael Palæologus — four successive emperors of distinguished ability, differing among themselves, each suited, perhaps, for his especial task. Theodore Lascaris I. is an impetuous hero who unhorses the Turkish Sultan in battle—who never misses an opportunity of gaining an advantage, unless it be by running too great risks. John Vatatzes, his son-in-law, is the eminently successful monarch, skilful general, and careful administrator. Theodore Lascaris II. is an idealist who at heart prefers books and speculation to arms and action, yet at the same time has an eye to the public finances, and never spares himself nor his men in his military efforts. Michael Palæologus, for many years a soldier of fortune, who had gained wide experience before he obtained the imperial crown, was one who watched his chances and secured his results, and who knew how to exalt the religious character of the Empire which it was his lot to restore; while the cloak of piety which he assumed was more imposing in the eyes of his contemporaries than in those of posterity, and helped to impart an odour of sanctity to the re-established state as well as to the new dynasty.

Put briefly, the interest of those who maintained the Empire in exile until it could be restored to its lawful centre and natural habitation lies in the fact that they professed to be, and in a sense that they *were*, Romans and at the same time Greeks, contending, with ultimate success, against "Latins" and "Barbarians." The exclusive student of classical antiquity may smile at the mention of wars between "Romans" and "Latins" waged through the thirteenth century of our era, in Asia Minor

and in the Balkan lands, but the Romanity of the Byzantines was not an empty name. The government which they upheld was an unbroken continuation of that founded on the Seven Hills in the Tiber valley. The "Latins" were united, it is true, in ecclesiastical union with Old Rome, but from the Eastern standpoint, all prestige had gone from Old Rome since it had ceased to be the centre of Empire. The Byzantine view had been energetically expressed by the Princess Anna Comnena, about a century earlier than the commencement of our history: "And all this of the high-priesthood forsooth, and of the primacy and the presidency over the whole universe, as the Latins speak and think; this is only a part of their insolence. For when the sceptre was removed thence to our own ruling city, and the Senate likewise, and the magistracy, there was also a removal of the episcopal power; and all the Emperors have given the precedence to the see of Constantinople; and the Council of Chalcedon, in raising it to the position of supreme overseer, put all the dioceses in the world under it." [1] The Byzantine princess may not have been quite correct in her interpretation either of the policy of the founder of New Rome or in the significance of the acts of the Council of Chalcedon, but she is good evidence as to the historical beliefs of her day and society, and the theories of civil and ecclesiastical authority founded upon them. We shall see how extremely important it became for the Empire which established itself in Nicæa, that it was supported by an ecclesiastical authority claiming œcumenic jurisdiction, though even in some Hellenic

[1] "Alexiad," I. 13.

lands the unity of the Church was threatened with disruption, and among all non-Hellenic peoples the ecclesiastical claims of Constantinople seemed as absurd as those of Old Rome had appeared to Anna Comnena.

But the word *Roman* carried in the East a meaning which it had lost in the West : that of union under a system of rational law. The Western nations were to some extent adopting laws and institutions derived from Constantinople, but they were mixed with customs that the East regarded as " barbarous." We shall find an instance of this distinction in the contemptuous refusal of a Byzantine noble to submit to a trial by ordeal.[1] The West was now, generally speaking, under varying forms of Feudalism. The East was never feudalized, except by the express efforts of Western conquerors. True, we find traces of a servile dependence of the agricultural population on wealthy landowners, and of the weakening centrifugal force of noble families, and often we seem to find something like military tenures. But we do *not* find a " complete organization of society on the basis of land-tenure," as Feudalism is ordinarily defined. Property and sovereignty are not confused, in idea or in reality ; the power to administer the law is derived from the central authority. Government may often be corrupt, but it *is* government, touching each subject individually, not through the medium of a hierarchy. Parties and pretenders and rebels we may find in plenty, but questions of divided allegiance belong to another sphere of ideas.

The subjects of the Empire, then, have some right

[1] See below, p. 190.

to their name of *Romans*. Still less can we dispute their title to that of *Greeks*. Ethnographically it may be wanting in precision; but when were the Greeks a single, pure-blooded race? From the time of Alexander (not to go back further) the word *Greek* had stood less for a people than for a civilization, based on the use of a common tongue, a common literature, a common stock of ideas and habits in thought, manners, morals, and religion. The Lascarids and their friends represent for better and for worse the Greek culture of their day. The fact need not be dwelt upon here, as it will force itself on us all through our study of these times. To familiarize oneself with the Nicene Empire involves making the acquaintance of most of the Greek scholars of the time, and the time, in Asia at least, was favourable to culture and erudition. This may seem paradoxical when we consider the disturbed character of the period, the want of security and leisure for peaceful studies, the need of attending first to practical needs. But in point of fact, we shall find many instances of the pursuit and maintenance of the intellectual life under unpromising conditions, and of an enthusiasm, not only for knowledge as such, but, less fortunately, for the perpetual rival of pure knowledge among Greeks, the art of using words, sometimes in the service of truth, sometimes as a surface ornament. Often enough it may surprise us that men living amid so much strife and stir should have time for the trivialities of belles-lettres. But the very fact that nothing connected with literature could seem to them trivial is an interesting fruit of their minds.

No apology will be given for introducing the reader to a time of decadence. The different strands of human life are closely interwoven, and perhaps no age is wholly progressive or wholly on the decline. A recent writer[1] on decadence has found the chief indication of that quality in a lack of co-operation between the intellectual and the practical forces of society. If he is right, the period we have to deal with is a decadent one, since neither in speculation, science, religion, nor morals do we seem to have the ring of actuality. Yet there were men who thought—if superficially—and men who tried to do their duty—sometimes along tortuous lines—; who may not have adequately comprehended the times on which they had fallen, but who endeavoured to keep at bay the evils that threatened civilization. Their efforts to attain some of their ends, in the strange mixed world in which they moved, even apart from their historical significance, are not devoid of human interest.

[1] Mr A. J. Balfour, "Decadence."

CHAPTER II

THE COLLAPSE OF CONSTANTINOPLE IN 1204 —PRELIMINARY CAUSES

THE story of the Fourth Crusade has been often and well told. Good historians have narrated [1] the curious series of events by which a great Christian host, summoned for the deliverance or recovery of Christian communities or places in Syria, came to be diverted from its original purpose, and in spite of papal prohibitions, and conscientious qualms in many of the leaders, took the aggressive, first against a city—Zara—which belonged not only to a Christian but to a crusading potentate, and afterwards against the Ruling City which had long stood as the great fortress of Christianity on the Bosporus. In this strange transaction the shares belonging to individual leaders, to the Western Emperor, and to the Venetian Republic, have been thoroughly investigated, though perhaps the exact proportion borne by premeditated arrangements to the combination of peculiar circumstances has not been fully determined. Here, as the whole history of the movement is rather a prelude to our task than an integral part of it, we will consider it more in its results than in its commencements.

[1] See especially, in English, Pears' "Story of the Fourth Crusade"; in German, the works on the same subject of H. Kretschmayr, and Norden.

It seems desirable, however, to take first a brief survey of those factors in European history which made the issue possible. Not that the several operations of each factor, or pair of factors, can be traced separately. The interaction among them leads to very complex results. But the complexity may be better realized if some attempt is made to distinguish its different elements. Let us then consider briefly how the way for the catastrophe of 1204 was prepared by: (1) the two Empires; (2) the two Churches; (3) the Norman Dukes; (4) the Italian Republics.

I. There had been, since the year 800 A.D., two rival claimants for the title and honours of the Roman Empire. To the historical mind there can be no shadow of a doubt that the only claim which could be rationally maintained was that of the rulers in Constantinople. However much their government had changed since the reign of Augustus, there had never been a distinct breach of continuity. The period of the sole rule of Irene, the irregularity of which gave the pretext to Pope Leo III. for crowning Charles the Frank as Emperor, hardly makes an exception, and it was of very brief duration. True, the Empire of Charlemagne was considered by his contemporaries and successors to be the actual Roman Empire revived in its ancient seat. But such a notion was at best but a convenient fiction, only more powerful than other political fictions through the hold that the idea of universal empire had on the mediæval mind, and the halo of sanctity which surrounded the crowned and acknowledged champion of all Christendom. As might naturally be expected, however, the coro-

nation of Charles greatly increased the difficulties that would in any case have arisen between East and West. He himself hoped and strove for a *modus vivendi* with the Emperor in Constantinople, and actually obtained it for a short time before his death, when an embassy from Michael Rhangabe in 812 acknowledged his title, and Charles was ready to reciprocate. For about a dozen years the relations between their respective successors continued friendly and courteous, and when the Eastern Emperors gave up all their opposition to the veneration of sacred images, there seemed no cause for a quarrel. But quarrels did occur. People were, no doubt, accustomed to the idea of colleagues in imperial authority, and so long as rulers in Old and New Rome could in any sense be regarded as colleagues, the unity of Christendom might remain unimpaired. But if they were not in intimate union, they must perforce be rivals.

The lands in which rivalry was most ready to show itself were the south of Italy and Sicily. The Eastern Empire still held Sicily, though its coasts were often infested by Saracen invaders, and a certain supremacy over Southern Italy; but in these regions Lombard and other rulers were not much controlled by imperial authority, whether that authority were asserted from Rome or from Constantinople.

In 867 the strong Macedonian dynasty was founded in Constantinople by Basil I. He was an able man, who did much to consolidate his dominions as well as to extend them, and he determined to recover the provinces of South Italy which were slipping out of the grasp of Byzantium. For this

purpose he allied himself with the Western Emperor Lewis II., who was engaged in warfare with Saracens and the refractory Lombard dukes. But this policy was not successful, or, rather, did not succeed in the end proposed. Lewis was not adequately supported by the Byzantines, and was captured by the Duke of Benevento. He was released, and obtained some successes, but died before he had time to accomplish his purposes, and Basil became a principal party in the war. He was entirely successful in reducing Calabria, though a great invasion of Saracens at the same time deprived him of Syracuse and of almost all Sicily. Basil had desired a Frankish princess as bride for his favourite son, but this, like many other marriage schemes between Byzantines and Carolingians, was never accomplished.

It is to be noted that in his correspondence with Basil, Lewis (or rather the learned secretary who wrote in his name [1]) sets forth his theory of the ideal relations of the two emperors, and vindicates his own right to be called Emperor of the Romans, while he addresses Basil as "Emperor of New Rome." He is greatly offended that Basil refuses to call him βασιλεύς, although he allows that that title is given in Holy Writ to such a secondary person as the King of Moab. The barbarous title *riga* which Basil applies to him instead belongs properly to no language at all. He insists on the unity of the Empire (for there is but one authority, that of the Trinity), and declares that the dominion over the Church on earth has been given by God to the two

[1] The letter, to be found in the anonymous writer of Salerno, is translated in great part in Gasquet's "L'Empire Byzantin et la Monarchie Franque," a very valuable book for this subject.

emperors conjointly, on condition that they act together in the bonds of charity.

Under the later Carolingians there arose in the West, as has happened so often since, in a small literary circle, a passion for Greece as the home of culture which led to a high estimate of the political Greece of the day. The Irishmen who represent this view find their spokesman in John the Scot, who lived on very friendly terms with Charles the Bald, and who, at the foot of his translations of Dionysius the Areopagite, appended some verses contrasting Rome with Constantinople, to the decided advantage of the latter. His patron, Charles, might have felt offended if he had set his heart on reviving the glories of Old Rome, but his attention was as a rule directed to the North-West.

Under the Saxon emperors (who begin with Otto I.—crowned 962—since Henry the Fowler, founder of the dynasty, is not reckoned as Emperor) a more distinctly German policy is pursued in the West, yet the Ottos were anxious to become masters of Italy, and it is probable that this object suggested the marriage of Otto II. to Theophane, daughter of the Byzantine Emperor Romanus II. (972 A.D.). It did not, however, result either in a satisfactory division of power between East and West in South Italy, or in combined and vigorous efforts against the Saracens. The Italian policy of Otto II. and of the half-Greek Otto III. was unsuccessful, and both died young.

The temporary decline of the Papacy, before the Clugniac ideas[1] had spread abroad and become dominant in the Western Church, was unfavourable

[1] See below, p. 21.

to any *rapprochement* between Byzantium and Rome. But when the Salian emperors were in the throes of the Investitures Controversy, it was not unnatural that the German should look to the Byzantine for help against the cosmopolitan claims of the bishops of Old Rome. Accordingly we find that Alexius Comnenus, in 1081, made a treaty with Henry IV., by which he was to receive a large present of money and valuables, with promise of more when Henry should appear in Italy against Alexius' Norman foes. In point of fact, Henry was not able to complete his part of the agreement, but the union, even if temporary, of the two emperors against the Pope and the Norman, was very significant. On the other hand, Anna Comnena, who gives us [1] her father's letter to Henry on this occasion, only calls the latter ῥὴξ Ἀλαμανίας, and Alexius, though using expressions both complimentary and cordial, seems to have avoided the use of a distinctive title.[2]

When the Pope seemed to have definitely obtained the upper hand, the Comnenian princes, true to their character and policy, changed sides and supported the winning cause. Later on, when the Hohenstauffen had revived the imperial authority in Germany and Italy, the balance of power is shifted, and we find Frederick Barbarossa, after he had conciliated the Pope by the Treaty of Venice (1177), taking a very lofty tone in a letter to the grandson of Alexius, the Emperor Manuel.[3] He

[1] In "Alexiad," Bk. III. 10.

[2] He calls him *πανευγενέστατε καὶ τῷ ὄντι χριστιανικώτατε ἀδελφέ*. The superscription of the letter is not given.

[3] There are long extracts from this letter in W. Norden's "Papstthum und Byzanz," p. 111.

gives Manuel no higher title than "Grecorum moderator," and actually claims for himself, as Roman Emperor, the right of sovereignty over the "regnum" of Greece, and while he demands obedience to the Pope, he asserts some personal authority in the affairs of the Byzantine Church. This letter, or the intentions which dictated it, led to a distinct breach between the emperors. It was widened by the marriage of Frederick's son Henry with the heiress of the Norman kingdom of Sicily. In fact, Henry VI. was on the point of an expedition against Byzantium itself, when the influence of Pope Celestine III. intervened to bring about an agreement.

Meantime the strong Comnenian House (the last member of which, the "tyrant" Andronicus, had become excessively unpopular) was succeeded by that of the Angeli—though the Angeli were nearly related to the Comneni, and are sometimes called by the same name.[1] Here arose a further complication. Henry VI. had brought about the marriage of his brother, Philip of Suabia, to a daughter of Isaac Angelus, less, it has been conjectured, from any great friendship for the Byzantines than from a desire, in the first negotiations, to prevent the lady from being married to a son of his rival for power in Sicily, Tancred the Norman.[2] In April 1195 Isaac was superseded and blinded by his brother, Alexius III. He had, however, a young son, also named Alexius, who

[1] See Genealogical Tree of Comneni and Angeli.

[2] In point of fact she was married to Tancred, but after his death and the conquest of Sicily by the Germans, she was carried off and married to Philip (Nicetas, 635).

might become a useful instrument in the hands of a powerful schemer. On the death of Henry VI. Philip of Suabia was chosen Emperor by a party of German nobles, though opposed by the Pope. Young Alexius was therefore brother-in-law to the Hohenstauffen candidate, and might look to him for help towards restoration and revenge. His uncle, Alexius, the reigning Emperor of Constantinople, though certainly not on very good terms with the Papacy, was not likely to be upset, by papal authority, in favour of the protégé of an anti-papal Emperor. But the papal side of the question will come more closely into view when we have looked at the subject on the ecclesiastical side, though all through this complicated struggle we are constantly reminded that the position of the Pope as temporal ruler in Italy frequently renders it necessary for him to subordinate ecclesiastical to political considerations.

By a kind of paradox the success of the Clugniac movement had led the Church into the conflict of worldly interests over which Clugny would have had her maintain a lofty supremacy.

II. In treating of the two Churches and their ambiguous relations so far as is necessary to explain the crisis of 1204, we must, of course, restrict our survey to the most obvious and least disputable facts in the situation. When we speak of two churches, we do not, of course, imply that the two-fold division was exhaustive, since there were other churches, such as the Nestorian and the Coptic, which would claim attention in a complete account of the ecclesiastical forces of these times, and the history of which is closely connected with the

struggle between Christianity and Islam in the East. But even if we have regard to Rome and Byzantium only, the situation is sufficiently complicated. In one sense the rivalry may seem natural enough. Whether the far-reaching claims of the Papacy made their way, by adaptation to the needs of the times, or by forged documents, or by masterly statesmanship, they were certain not to be readily accepted in New Rome. In reading the story of the relations between the Roman and Greek Churches, we are constantly struck by the fact that a breach, once healed, often shows itself again in another place. The tendency to division is always there, and a number of occasions are constantly cropping up which bring it into prominence. It is hardly a racial division that we have, but certainly one which coincides with differences in language and in culture. The Greeks always incline to regard the Italians (the word *Roman* they would reserve for themselves) with contempt as barbarians; the Romans regard the Greeks with suspicion, as shifty and self-conceited. As regards doctrine, they were brought up, in great part, on different literatures, and did not naturally take the same point of view, and yet in doctrine the permanence and the bitterness of dissension were less manifest than in cases which directly concerned the question of authority. This is notably seen in the course of two great controversies, the Christological and the Iconoclastic. When the Council of Chalcedon, in 451 A.D., made, or endeavoured to make, a settlement of the great Christological conflict between Nestorius, Eutyches, and the theologians who formed a middle party, the decision (in favour of the theologians

of the mean) was practically dictated by a Roman Pope and set forth in a Roman document. Yet the same Council, by a canon acknowledging a kind of equality between the patriarchs of the two capitals, brought about an even less harmonious attitude between East and West. Again, in 798, when the first period of Iconoclasm was put to an end under Irene by the Second Council of Nicæa, the Pope, although he had been recognized head of the supreme court of appeal by the oppressed Iconodules, was treated with such insufficient cordiality by the Byzantine rulers that no proper conciliation was effected. After the final restoration of the Icons, by the Synod of Constantinople in 843, the case was different. But the friendly understanding between the two ecclesiastical powers, which amounted to an acknowledgment of the superiority of the Old Rome on the part of the New, was soon disturbed by fresh difficulties. However doctrines might be affirmed or denied, there was a standing grievance in the assumption, by both Pope and Patriarch, of the title *œcumenical* or universal, ever since the latter part of the sixth century; in the rival claims to direct ecclesiastical authority in the Italian portion of the Byzantine Empire; and in the opposite interpretations given to the canons of Nicæa and Chalcedon as to the relative ranks of the great patriarchates.

The difference became more acute with the growth of the ideals of reforming monachism as to the proper relations of Church and State. We have already spoken of these ideals as belonging to Clugny, but before the great days of Clugny they had received vigorous expression in another

monastery, that of Studium in Constantinople.[1] They did not necessarily involve at first the subordination of the civil power to the ecclesiastical, but they did emphasize the distinction between the Church and the world in such a way as to repudiate the notion of the Church as an arm of the State, or the immunity of any State officials from ecclesiastical obligation. It is not impossible that the whole Church movement might have accomplished a good deal of its work even if it had not become indissolubly associated with the belief in the supremacy of St Peter's Chair. In Byzantium it was very natural that any Church party opposed to the imperial power should look to Rome for support. The close proximity of Emperor and Patriarch, with the facility necessarily arising for emperors to remove recalcitrant patriarchs, rendered possible a Cæsaro-papism from which Old Rome, except perhaps very occasionally, under a peculiarly active emperor, was entirely free. In the earlier days there were three other patriarchs whose concurrence was supposed to be necessary for the legality of ecclesiastical councils and common action. But the patriarchate of Alexandria, which, under the masterful rule of Cyril and Dioscurus, had striven for supremacy over all the rest, had sunk under the stout blow it had received at Chalcedon, and, like the other two, Antioch and Jerusalem, could only be represented at councils by delegates, or by persons conveniently regarded in that light. Rome and Constantinople were left face to face, and the supremacy or even the detachment of

[1] I may be allowed to refer to my work on this subject: "Theodore of Studium, his Life and Times."

Constantinople meant the extinction of all liberty on the part of the Eastern Church. Paradoxical as it may sound, the superiority of the rival see was the only guarantee of independence to the Byzantine clergy and monks.

As in the case of the supreme political authority, so with the ecclesiastical, the conflict, so far as it was territorial, went on in Greek Italy. Early in the Iconoclastic Controversy, Leo the Isaurian had withdrawn these provinces from the obedience of Rome under that of Constantinople. Where rituals differed, there were for centuries continual controversies and compromises. Nicephorus Phocas, in 968, prohibited the distinctive Latin rite in Apulia and Calabria. Still, it was not entirely suppressed. Meanwhile the dissensions became acute, and the catchwords and party lines on both sides were definitely formed in the controversies aroused by two notable patriarchs of Constantinople: Photius (847-869 and 878-886) and Michael Cerularius (1043-1058).

Photius is distinguished above all mediæval Greeks by the wide range of his learning; and his distinctively Greek character is also shown in the subtlety with which he gained and regained ecclesiastical power. When contending for his see with his rival, Ignatius, and again when he had lost power and recovered it on Ignatius' decease, he was in correspondence with Rome, and brought into the foreground those differences between the Churches which were to remain permanent. Besides these, there was a bitter rivalry for the obedience of the newly-founded Church in Bulgaria, the result first of Eastern and then of Western missions. But the

doctrinal point on which Photius insisted was that of the Procession of the Holy Ghost from the Father only, whereas in the West generally the words "proceeding from the Father and the Son" were accepted. They were not, however, as yet authoritatively adopted into the Nicene Creed, except locally, and if neither Church had had any desire of finding fault with the other, that difference alone would not have caused a schism. More impressive to ordinary laymen were certain differences in discipline and ritual, particularly the toleration by the Greeks, under certain conditions, of married clergymen, and the Latin practices of fasting on Saturdays, and using unleavened bread in the Eucharist. This last point of ritual laid those who practised it open to the charge of Judaism, as also—from Christians totally ignorant of Jewish habits—did the Sabbath fast. Various futile attempts at accommodation were made from time to time, but we pass on to the critical occasion in 1054. It is one of the few moments in which we find a patriarch opposed to his Emperor and also at variance with the Pope. Pope Leo IX., who had lately suffered reverses in contest with the Normans, sent an embassy with conciliatory proposals to Constantinople. The Emperor, Constantine IX., seems to have been favourable to their cause. They triumphed so far as to obtain the punishment of a monk who had written against the Western practices just mentioned. But when they showed that they had no idea of conciliation, only of enforcing obedience, their cause was lost. They departed, leaving their bill of accusation against the Eastern Church on the high altar of

St Sophia. Soon afterwards a Synod in Constantinople retaliated by pronouncing them excommunicate, and the Pope in turn excommunicated the Byzantine Patriarch. This moment is generally taken as marking the final separation of the Churches. It did not, however, mean a permanent breaking-off of all relations and intercourse between East and West, and might seem, from some points of view, not much more important than other breaches which had occurred before and been temporarily repaired. It is noteworthy, however, that the feeling of the people generally seems to have been strongly excited against Rome. Under the Iconoclasts a considerable portion of the citizens, in their sympathy with the persecuted monks, had favoured the party which looked to the Pope for support. But from this time, if not before, Church feeling and patriotism were united in opposition to what was regarded as a foreign claim to jurisdiction and spiritual authority.

Meantime the pressure felt from the Seljukian Turks began to make the Byzantine authorities anxious to obtain the help of Latin Christendom against the forces of Islam. In 1073 Michael VII. wrote with that object to Gregory VII. (Hildebrand), holding out hopes of a reunion of the Churches. It seemed a grand opportunity for Hildebrand. Historians have often speculated as to whether the Crusades might not have had a different issue if they had begun under his direction. His idea was to begin with a reunion of the Churches in doctrine and discipline, an " apostolic concord " in favour, of course, of the Roman system, and then to march eastward himself with fifty thousand

Christian warriors against the unbelievers. But his difficulties with the German Emperor absorbed his energies and resources, and the great scheme came to nothing. In 1095 came the great appeal of Alexius to Urban II., which was brought before the Council of Piacenza. It is curious to see that Urban was willing to entertain and authorize the appeal without waiting to settle the points of ecclesiastical difference. Some historians[1] have attributed this neglect to Urban's exclusive and sentimental regard for the recovery of the Holy Land, but it seems rather to have been part of a scheme for recovering the East for Christianity without consideration of any differences among Christians. If so, the policy was more generous than wise. It was natural that Alexius should regard the ultimate objects of the First Crusade in a different light from that of the Crusaders themselves. The charges of trickery brought against him, especially in his capture of Nicæa, have not been altogether substantiated by recent investigations. But when the Latins had made their conquests and set up their ecclesiastical system in Eastern lands,—still more emphatically when a Norman, of the family always at deadly feud with the Comneni, controlled the ancient patriarchate of Antioch—murmurs arose from those who feared that they had repelled Mohammedans only to strengthen the hands of heretics. In 1098, and again the next year, Urban II. held councils with a view to restoring unity. But he had lost his great chance and nothing was effected.

[1] See the subject discussed in W. Norden's "Papstthum und Byzanz," Bk. I. chap. ii.

In spite of diplomatic shiftings the Comneni were generally quite ready for some kind of accommodation, but the difficulty was not unlike that which appeared, in much later days, between Luther and Eck: the anti-papal party wanted discussion, as of open questions; the Papacy demanded a return to obedience. The Roman view is set forth in innumerable papal documents. A spirited statement of the Greek side is to be found in a letter from the Archbishop Nicetas of Nicomedia to Bishop Anselm of Havelberg, in the year 1136.[1] The writer complains that Greek ecclesiastics cannot be expected to accept decrees as to the making of which they have not been consulted. "If the Roman Pontiff, seated on his exalted throne, chose to thunder at us, to hurl his mandates at us, and to give judgment concerning us and our churches according to his own good pleasure and without our advice; if he had full command over us, where were there room for brotherly and fatherly relations? . . . What would avail us our knowledge of the Scriptures? Or the learning of our masters? Or the most noble minds of Greek sages? The one authority of the Roman Pontiff, which you declare to be over all men, leaves no place for any of these things. He is the only bishop, the only lord, the only teacher, he, as the only good Shepherd, is responsible to God alone for all the things to him alone committed."

The outlook was not hopeful. Before the end of the Comnenian dynasty, the anti-Latin policy of the Emperor Andronicus had made matters worse. The Angeli—Isaac and his brother Alexius

[1] See "Papstthum und Byzanz," pp. 97-99.

—may have had schemes; Alexius III.[1] may have imagined it possible to gain over the Pope by concessions and receive in return an acknowledgment of the superiority of his imperial position over that of the German Emperor. But even if he could have persuaded the Pope to help him, the feeling of the Greek clergy and monks would have checked any such design.

III. It has been necessary to refer to the Normans in speaking of the relations of the rival Empires and Churches of East and West. We have seen that South Italy and Sicily had been the field of many conflicting forces. In the early part of the eleventh century another element was added to the confusion of peoples and claims: besides Greeks, Lombards, papal emissaries, German armies and Saracen marauders, we have Norman adventurers who subsequently become Norman conquerors. The captains of the house of Tancred acquired Apulia in 1042 and Sicily within about thirty years from that time. At first it was very doubtful into which of the scales there suspended their power would be cast. The Popes had much to apprehend from such near and energetic neighbours. In 1053 the Normans inflicted a defeat on Leo IX. at Civitella. Before long, however, they were entirely gained for the Hildebrandine cause, and became vassals (though not always very submissive ones) and constant allies of the Popes in all their conflicts, whether with German Emperors or with Byzantine Church and people.

The greatest leaders of the conflict between

[1] See Norden, p. 132. But I fail to see how Norden's view can be proved from Innocent's correspondence.

Byzantines and Normans are Alexius I. on the one side, and, on the other, Robert Guiscard, followed by his son Bohemond. Their field of rivalry was wide and scattered, since, besides South Italy and Sicily, it included part of Illyria: in fact the strife was hottest in and around the city of Durazzo (Dyrrhachium, Epidamnus), notable for two other conflicts important in universal history (to say nothing of two that will concern us later): the beginnings of the Peloponnesian War and the decisive struggle between Cæsar and Pompey. But the scope and the intensity of the antagonism were increased when Bohemond became a Crusader, and won for himself the principality of Antioch. In so doing, there is little doubt that Bohemond was breaking his engagements with Alexius. He was now in a position to urge more powerfully the complaints of the Crusaders against the Greeks. Vehement accusations of the unfriendliness of the heretic Greeks were sent to Pope Paschal II., the successor of Urban. In 1104 Bohemond, by a cunning stratagem,[1] was conveyed without the suspicions of his enemies from Syria to the West, where he endeavoured to gain helpers against Alexius. In 1108 there was more fighting about Dyrrhachium, but this time the Normans were defeated, and Bohemond made a treaty with Alexius and acknowledged him as his suzerain over his principality of Antioch. The Byzantine claims over Antioch were successfully asserted by the son and grandson respectively of Alexius, John and Manuel Comnenus. But this was not without

[1] According to Anna Comnena, he travelled as a corpse, a putrid fowl being shut up with him to discourage inquiry.

sharp fighting. The Latin Crusaders in Antioch hated the Greeks, and especially resented the forcing on themselves of a patriarch belonging to the Eastern Church. Manuel, however, was generally successful. In 1159 he reduced Reynold, Prince of Antioch, to subjection, and two years later he took as his second wife a princess of the Norman-Antiochene house.

Meantime Bohemond's relatives in Sicily had been equally active against the Emperor. In 1147 Roger II. led an expedition against Greece. The Pope, however, anxious for the success of the Second Crusade, gave him no encouragement. Roger got possession of Corinth, but was not able to secure his conquests on the mainland, though he kept possession of Corfu.

The rivalry between the silk manufacturers of Greece and Sicily increased the hostility of Byzantines and Normans, and the treacherous dealings of the Emperor Andronicus gave a new pretext for war. William II. took up the cause of some exiled nobles of the Comnenian family and invaded the countries to the north of Greece. He gained Dyrrhachium and pressed on to Thessalonica, which fell in 1185. He continued his devastating march and advanced on Byzantium. But a timely revolution checked his successes. Andronicus was supplanted by Isaac Angelus, and though Isaac was not a man of great ability, the Greeks, under a capable general, Branas, repulsed the invaders. Subsequently, as we have seen, the aunt and heiress of William II. was married to Henry, son of Frederick Barbarossa, and the enmity of the Norman to the Greek might seem to have been passed over to the Hohenstauffen.

Henry VI. obtained Sicily, but not without fighting, and he considered himself heir to those North Greek lands which had been temporarily conquered by Willaim II. Henry VI. died in 1197, leaving as heir to the Sicilian kingdom a young son, afterwards the Emperor Frederick II., whose claims were supported by the Papacy, though the union of Sicily with Germany under one rule was, of course, strongly opposed to the papal interests and policy.

IV. We turn now to observe the character of the part played in this general conflict of interests by the rising republics of Italy, especially by Venice, Pisa, and Genoa. The probability that these cities would take an important share in any coming struggles might have been judged from the course of events during the last century and a half. In the first place, their commercial rivalry with Constantinople was always on the increase, especially after the First Crusade had opened up new trade routes to the East. Then, again, the Eastern Empire, in the terrible and long-continued strain of resistance to Saracens and Turks, had been obliged to look to the alliance of the Italian cities to support her against foes in the West. And thirdly, the concessions to foreign merchants which resulted from such alliances, by which separate quarters were allowed to them in Constantinople, under their special jurisdictions, gave ceaseless opportunities for friction and disturbance. Add to this the prevalence of piracy in the Ægean, and the narrow limits that separated the corsair from the naval captain on the one hand and the ship-owning merchant on the other, and we are not surprised to find frequent collisions, compromises, and re-

newed misunderstandings between — to use the terms of the Byzantine chroniclers—the "Greeks" and the "Latins."

Venice was the first of the Italian cities to be bound by a commercial treaty to the Empire of which it had only gradually ceased to be an integral part. It did very good service to Alexius I. in his wars with Robert Guiscard, and received in return the privilege of free trade all over the Empire, with a quarter in Constantinople and possibly with the recognition of its supremacy in Dalmatia and Croatia. Later on, however, the friendship of Venice was courted by the Latin kings of Jerusalem. This led to friction with John Comnenus and a short maritime war among the Greek Islands, but John thought it better to end hostilities by confirming the privileges of Venice.

It was part of the policy of Manuel Comnenus to encourage the various Italian cities, possibly with the object of playing one off against the other. Pisa had had a quarter in the city and certain privileges since IIII, in spite of its friendliness to Bohemond. Genoa obtained a Golden Bull from Manuel, with a good quarter in Constantinople and a reduction of dues. But it did not secure these advantages without opposition. Nor did it prove a trusty ally, as it had been won over to friendship with Frederick Barbarossa. There seem to have been frequent conflicts among the different foreign settlements and between them and the Greeks, although, by the terms of their treaties, the Italians had consented to serve for pay on the imperial fleets. Venice was bound to support the Eastern Emperor against all foes, while the other cities

acknowledged less weighty obligations and held correspondingly fewer privileges. In 1171, feeling was so hot against the Venetians, that the Emperor sequestered their goods, and war ensued. Manuel seems to have been meditating a restoration of the exarchate in Italy. But, though he gained some advantages, he found it better, considering danger from the Turks, to make a treaty and restore Venetian privileges in return for compensation. It was in the course of the negotiations connected with this war that the Doge Henry Dandolo went to Constantinople, and returned wholly or partially blind.[1] How the injury had been inflicted is not clearly and consistently told. But it is supposed that a deep grudge against the Constantinopolitans was implanted in the man who more than any other had subsequently the power to work them evil.

In 1182 there came a crisis to the Italians in Constantinople. In the course of the tumults attending the usurpation of Andronicus, there was a general massacre of Italians in the city. This is said by some Italian authorities to have been a chief cause of the hostile expedition of William II. of Sicily, already referred to. In course of time, the insecurity and hostility resulting from the massacres subsided, and the Italian cities recovered their privileges. But extensive acts of piracy, especially on the part of the Genoese, kept the relations between Italians and Greeks always more or less strained, while the rivalry among the cities themselves rendered it certain that in a serious

[1] The story of how Dandolo was blinded at Byzantium by order or connivance of the Emperor is not told by the best authorities.

conflict, Constantinople would not find in all her protégés a constant and steady support.

The state of things sketched in this chapter seems partly to account for the strange-seeming fact that Byzantium, the early bulwark of Christendom, which had, in conflict with Persia, carried on a kind of perpetual crusade before the Crusades had been proclaimed by popes and led by Western princes, should itself become the goal and victim of a holy war summoned for the defence of Christianity. One Byzantine Emperor—Heraclius—had recovered the true cross. Another—Leo the Isaurian—had beaten back the Saracens from Constantinople, and thereby, possibly, saved Europe. It might have been thought natural that one of their successors should lead the armies which were to redress the fortunes of the Church in the East. But it seemed as if a perversity of fate—or of human imbecility—had rendered such an event impossible. And if not leading, Byzantium was, under the circumstances, obliged, not to be left aside, but to be crushed, for a time at least, under the tramp of the crusading armies.

CHAPTER III

THE DIVERSION OF THE FOURTH CRUSADE (*continued*) —PROXIMATE CAUSES AND CHIEF EVENTS

THE last five years of the twelfth century comprised four great changes among the crowned heads of Europe. Two of them have already been alluded to, but it seems desirable to consider them here in relation to the events which were to follow.

In 1195 the Emperor Alexius III. seized and blinded his brother Isaac, imprisoned him and his young son Alexius, and occupied the throne. Isaac and Alexius were of the family of Angelus, but Alexius preferred to use the surname of Comnenus, to which he had some family claims.[1] Alexius was not a great emperor. He can hardly be said to have inaugurated any new line of policy, and all his reign he had to contend against rebel subjects, Slavonic foes, and Italian pirates. Yet he seems to have had some ideas of universal empire as a thing to be attained for himself and his dynasty, and he was willing, as already said, on certain conditions, to enter into negotiations with Rome for the reunion of the Churches. Politically he made the worst mistake that, at that particular juncture, it was possible for him to make: he alienated the Venetians by withholding from them certain payments which they considered as their

[1] See Genealogical Tree at end.

due (being a debt incurred by the Emperor Manuel), and by favouring their rivals, the Pisans and Genoese. By the corruption of his government and his neglect of the national defence—especially with regard to the navy—he rendered his country less capable of making a stand against the attacks for which his violent and inhumane conduct had given sufficient pretexts.

Two years after the accession of Alexius III., in the autumn of 1197, Henry VI., the German Emperor, died at Messina. We have already seen how his prominent international position, together with his ambitious projects, had made him a very important factor in the political problems of his time. Had he lived, he would certainly have succeeded in maintaining the power of the Hohenstauffen in Sicily as well as in Germany, and have used the opportunities given for fighting out the old quarrel with the East—possibly for reuniting the two empires and the two churches. Whether he took the allegiance of Richard of England, on which he had insisted, more seriously than the English did, it is difficult to say, as his early death shattered many far-reaching schemes. He had taken steps to secure the succession of his infant son Frederick, but though this was achieved in Sicily, through the efforts of the Queen-Mother Constance, it was out of the question, for the time, in Germany. Henry's brother, Philip of Suabia, was elected Emperor by the friends of his house, but a rival candidate was set up, under the influence of France, England and Denmark, and by the action of a good many German magnates—Otto IV. of Brunswick. If Philip had succeeded without

dispute, he would probably have taken a leading part in the struggle with the East. But he was not a strong man, and his hands were already full, though, as we shall see, his kinship by marriage with the dispossessed Byzantine princes made it almost necessary for him to help towards the final catastrophe.

The papal throne became vacant very soon after the imperial, and the new Pope, elected in January 1198, was a statesman, and was sure to have his views and to assert them strongly in this as in all other matters. Innocent III. (Lothario of Segni) was a man of wide knowledge, especially in the law, of high ideals with regard to his own calling and office, and of boundless activity. The many volumes extant containing lengthy theological treatises, numerous sermons, and a vast number of letters to small and great concerning practical matters in the management of churches, states, and lesser communities, give one the impression of an ubiquitous mind working with never-flagging energy. Innocent had embraced the principles of Clugny and those of Hildebrand, and in his efforts to carry them to their logical conclusions, he involved the Papacy in serious controversies with the crowned heads of Germany, England and France. But his position, if, on the whole, a glorious one, involved compromises and much self-restraint. In the troubled affairs of the East he saw a possibility of the reunion of the churches. But he had reason to doubt the policy of achieving such an object by means of ambitious crusading leaders, and he was not likely to favour any further growth of the Hohenstauffen power and policy. The interests

of the infant Frederick, as hereditary king of Sicily, he was ready to support, but he opposed the imperial claims of Philip of Suabia, and favoured Otto IV. Beyond all immediate political and even ecclesiastical objects, he was moved habitually by a strong sense of justice, and in his labours for the reunion of Christendom he was broad-minded enough to desire a conciliatory policy with the neglect of minor differences. In the time of crisis he was obliged to act and to act strongly, but as Italian sovereign, as international diplomat, and as father of the Christian Church, he was unable to pursue a perfectly consistent policy, and could not always be sure of success.

The fourth change among the European sovereigns was brought about by the arrow at Chaluz that ended the career of Richard Cœur de Lion. If he had lived longer, he would probably have been asked to lead the Fourth Crusade, and its issues might have been different. Richard had already dealt a considerable blow, if not to the Eastern Empire, at least to Hellenic civilization in the Mediterranean, by seizing and feudalizing the Island of Cyprus. Although generally subject to the Empire, Cyprus had been seized by a certain Isaac, who had taken the name of Comnenus, though his relation to the ruling family is not clear. It is well known how Isaac's lack of courtesy to Richard's bride and sister led to hostilities which ended in the reduction of Cyprus by the English king, though Richard subsequently made it over to Guy of Lusignan, the claimant to the throne of Jerusalem.

In Asia also there had been the removal by death

of powerful persons, a most fortunate circumstance for the mutually distrustful or even hostile bodies of Christians in the East. Saladin died in 1193, and his dominions were divided among his sons, brother, and great-nephews. These did not live in peace and harmony together, and there were various internecine wars, which established, in 1202, for a short time only, a single ruler of the Saracens over Syria, Mesopotamia, and Egypt. Meanwhile, on the death of Kilidje Arslan II., Seljukian Sultan of Roum (who ruled from Iconium), there was a division among his ten sons. We shall see that the Sultan of Iconium was a formidable ruler for some time, but the power of the Selkujians was waning. At the same time, the crusading kingdoms or principalities had become very weak, chiefly through disputed successions and consequent wars. The kingdom of Jerusalem was now ruled from Acre. Edessa had succumbed altogether. Antioch and Tripoli were united, but not very prosperous, and often at variance with the neighbouring Christian kingdom of Armenia. Cyprus, as we have seen, was ruled on feudal principles by a member of the royal family of Jerusalem.

It seemed to the Pope a good time to strike a stout blow for the recovery of Christian interests in the East. There was still much crusading enthusiasm in many parts of Europe, especially among territorial princes, and probably in the lesser knights in country parts. In the mercantile republics, on the other hand, a *modus vivendi* between Christians and Mohammedans had come to appear not only necessary but highly desirable, though, if a holy war were more profitable, its holiness

would certainly be no drawback. Innocent III. desired a crusade, perhaps in order to weld Western Christendom together again, perhaps because he had a sincere desire for the recovery of the Holy Places. The Third Crusade had been a failure through the conflicting interests and personal rivalries of its leaders. This time a great appeal was made to the religious feelings of nobles, who proved more responsive than the kings. The preacher of the Crusade was Fulk of Neuilly, a French priest, who seems to have had a remarkable power of stirring pious emotions. He died, however, before the enterprise was fairly started, as did his convert and the chosen leader of the Crusaders, Thibaud of Chartres. The place of Thibaud was taken by Boniface of Montferrat. He and his family had been very actively engaged in various crusading operations. He had alliances with various Greek families, and was a man of great personal ambition. Prominent among the leaders were Baldwin and Henry of Flanders, Louis of Blois, Hugh Count of St Pol, and Geoffrey de Villehardouin. From the last-mentioned we have the vivid narrative of the expedition, which, however liable to correction in consideration of a natural bias, must remain one of our principal authorities for its history.

A large part of the crusading host consisted of cavalry. There were no means at hand for transporting men and horses to Egypt (strangely called by the Western chroniclers Babylon [1]), which all had agreed, and quite reasonably, to make the place of landing and of departure for Syria. Recourse

[1] Babylon originally stood for Cairo. But, of course, considerable territory was under the same government.

was had to Venice, and a treaty was drawn up by that republic and the Crusaders, and afterwards confirmed by the Pope. Venice was ready to supply means of transport for 85,000 marks. In addition, it would provide fifty armed galleys "for the love of God" if the Crusaders on their side would agree to let Venice have the half of any conquests that might be made. This was in March 1201. It was not an easy bargain, but perhaps not an impossible one to carry out, if all the Crusaders had come promptly to Venice to avail themselves of the transport at the appointed time. But Crusaders were never easy to keep together. Some preferred to start from Marseilles, and others had other views. It is hard to exonerate Dandolo and the other Venetian diplomats from the charge of duplicity and hypocrisy, seeing that either now or soon after they concluded a treaty with the Sultan of Cairo, expressly declaring that they would *not* help the crusaders to enter Egypt.[1] The Venetians may have hoped all along that the conditions would not be fulfilled, and that they would have at their command a powerful host ready by any means to escape its obligations, and anxious only to obtain bread. But if they had at first no quite definite scheme for diverting the army to their own profit, fortune soon provided them with a red herring to lay across the Crusaders' track.

This red herring was the young Alexius, son of Isaac Angelus, who, having been carelessly guarded,

[1] The time formerly assigned to this treaty was the autumn of 1200. But Hopf and most other historians place it in May 1202. It was not in this case signed till after the treaty with the Crusaders, and after the beginnings of the schemes of Philip and Boniface on behalf of the young Alexius.

made his escape from Constantinople in the spring of this same year (1201). He secured passage in a Pisan ship to Sicily, where his sister, the wife of Philip of Suabia, received him with open arms. He subsequently went north, and spent some time in Germany with Philip himself, and then came south again to try to secure encouragement or support from the Pope. He was full of promises for the reunion of the Churches and for active personal help in the Crusade. But the Pope was too wary to place much reliance on the assurances of a fugitive youth.[1] He was still in correspondence with Alexius III., though not on particularly friendly terms with him, and able to use threats of stern measures, which have been interpreted as signifying some intention of helping the pretender. But in fact Innocent had no intention either of wrecking the Crusade, or of playing into the hands of Philip of Suabia, whom he had recently excommunicated. All along he was staunch in his warnings to the Crusaders not to shed Christian blood. It is an additional proof, if one were needed, of the failure of the Greeks to understand the situation in the West, that the most competent Byzantine historian —Nicetas Choniates—regarded the Pope as the wirepuller in the anti-Greek movement.

That character is rather to be ascribed to Boniface, Marquis of Montferrat. He was related to Philip of Suabia by marriage, and also, as has been already noticed, he was much versed in Oriental

[1] In the letter Al. to Inn., to which Inn. replied in v. 122, it is stated that Alexius had not been born before his father's accession (1195). He must thus have been, as Nicetas states, son of Isaac's first wife. Nicetas makes his sister the daughter of the same mother.

affairs and full of Oriental ambitions. He and Philip were together in 1201, and may have concocted the whole plot together for the diversion of the Crusade against Constantinople,[1] though it is more probable that the schemers did not see all the way clearly before their faces, but hoped, by fishing in troubled waters, to secure some gratification for their own avarice and ambition.

Meantime a good many Crusaders had arrived in Venice, but the forces were incomplete and the transport money not forthcoming. After many heartburnings and some protests on the part of those in whom the real crusading spirit was still strong, an arrangement was made by which the hosts should join the Venetians in an attack on Zara, a place belonging to their enemy, King Andrew of Hungary, merely in order to win, by fair means or foul, the means for paying their debt. There was an impressive service in St Mark's, at which Dandolo and many other Venetians took the cross. But gorgeous ceremonies, with many prayers and tears, could not disguise the fact that the bulk of the Crusaders were about to attack the lands not only of a Christian but of a crusading prince, in defiance of papal prohibition. Zara fell after a short siege. Innocent excommunicated those who had taken part in it, but afterwards admitted them—except the Venetians—to conditional absolution. But he warned them not to repeat their fault by attacking any Christians except such as were opposing the Crusade.

The winter of 1202-3 was spent by the Crusaders

[1] See the contemporary writer of "Gesta Innocentii," 83, but he only says *dicebatur*.

in Zara. Before they had left Venice they had received messengers from the party of young Alexius, and in Zara they heard his definite propositions, set forth by the Marquis of Montferrat, of liberal help in their crusading enterprise, coupled with the submission of the Greek Church to Rome, if they would, on their way, promise to restore to him his rightful inheritance. Boniface, with much eloquence, urged the acceptance of the offer. The army proceeded to Corfu, and there Alexius joined it, and the arrangement was actually made. One might have thought that the personal experience of the Crusaders ought to have shown them the futility of making engagements the successful accomplishment of which depended in great measure on parties that were not present. But they did not stop to consider where Alexius could find means to carry on the Crusade, or whether he could easily persuade the Greek clergy and people to give up all their ecclesiastical autonomy and liberties. They must have become somewhat demoralized, and there is mention of bribes given to some of the leaders. There was, however, all through, a protesting minority, whom Villehardouin, bent on making the best of a bad business, accuses of a recalcitrant desire to break up the army.

Towards the end of May, 1203, the Crusaders left Corfu. They doubled Cape Malea and came on to Eubœa and thence to Andros, which they captured. They landed again, to gather in a harvest, at Abydos, on the Hellespont, and arrived by midsummer within ten miles by sea of Constantinople. Their first attacks were directed against two cities on the other side of the Bosporus, Chalcedon and

Chrysopolis. They made their camp in the neighbourhood, and soon took the Tower of Galata, on the Golden Horn over against the City, below the ground occupied by the present tower of that name.

Alexius III. had made sundry spasmodic attempts to meet the danger. His bodyguard of Varangians were more to be trusted than any others of his foreign mercenaries. This was composed of Danes and Englishmen, who had been employed in this function since the time of Alexius I. Unlike the Italians, they had no home interests which collided with their duty to their adopted country, and they fought faithfully and bravely. There was at least one capable and intrepid man in command of the Greek forces, the Emperor's son-in-law, Theodore Lascaris, the future founder of the Empire in Nicæa. The strength and wealth of Constantinople, the number of its inhabitants, and the total want of any loyal feeling towards young Alexius, who was regarded as a traitor to the Church, ought to have enabled the Greeks to make a good stand. But although there were several days' hard fighting, from the towers of the ships and the towers of the walls and around, the Venetians, under blind old Dandolo, effected an entrance into the city. An accidental fire increased the havoc. The Emperor reflected how King David had saved himself by flight before Absalom,[1] and, taking his favourite daughter and a bag of gold and precious stones, he departed from the city. Some of the Greeks, feeling little more inclination towards the unpatriotic Alexius who had returned than towards the cowardly Alexius who had

[1] Acropolita, i. 2.

fled, brought the ex-emperor Isaac out of his dungeon, acknowledged him as Emperor, and sent word to the Crusaders what they had done. Young Alexius had hitherto posed as Emperor among them, and little seems to have been thought or said of his father. The only way now, however, to save the situation, was for them to acknowledge Isaac as joint-emperor with his son, now Alexius IV., on condition that he confirmed the promises made by the latter. To this he was willing to consent, and a grand coronation ceremony took place on August 1st.

The next few months were full of dissensions and troubles. The attempt was made to establish ecclesiastical conformity with Roman usage, and efforts were made, even by emptying the churches of their treasures, to raise the money wanted by Alexius for his powerful guests. These were naturally obnoxious to the people, and a devastating fire caused by the fanatical burning of a mosque added to the confusion. Alexius made a little diversion by going out with some of the Crusaders against his uncle, now a fugitive in Thrace, and after some successes was received back in triumph. But this only postponed the outburst of the revolution. Father and son were abject debtors to the Latins and hated by their own people, and neither had the personal qualities which make a popular ruler. The champion of the people was another member of the Byzantine aristocracy — Alexius Ducas, generally known as Murzuphlus. He was a man of courage and activity, and apparently without any scruples. He insinuated himself into the favour of the young Alexius IV., who made him

his *protovestiarios*, and then tried to raise up an effective anti-Latin rising in the city and in the country round. But the people were quite demoralized, and preferred wreaking vengeance on inanimate things. It was at this time that a colossal bronze statue of Athena, possibly the work of Phidias, stolen from the Athenian Acropolis, was hacked in pieces by a drunken mob, because by her position and attitude she seemed to have been signalling to the foes from the West.[1] The Latins (as the original Crusaders and the Venetians are always called by the Byzantine writers) were mostly encamped outside the walls. The Emperors seem to have concerned themselves Isaac with astrology, Alexius with amusement. Matters came to a crisis when a deputation of Latins went solemnly to the Emperor in the Palace of Blachernæ to set forth their grievances and denounce the infidelity of the princes for whom they had made such ineffectual efforts. It was considered a remarkable piece of good fortune for the deputies that they escaped alive. There was now no more semblance of union. But Alexius IV. had not the spirit to appeal to his own people and rely on their efforts. His intrigues with the crusading leaders gave the pretext for a tumultuous meeting in Sta Sophia, in which the Greeks sought to create a new Emperor. No one was willing to accept the office. Probably Murzuphlus was considered too dangerous a candidate. A certain Nicolas Canabus was nominated and acknowledged, but he was hardly Emperor even in name, and certainly not in reality.

[1] Nicetas, 740. *Cf.* E. A. Gardner's "Six Greek Sculptors," p. 87.

Meantime Murzuphlus thought it as well to clear the course by getting rid of Alexius IV. altogether. Under pretext of caring for his safety, he threw him into a prison, where he caused him soon afterwards to be strangled. Isaac died of grief, it was said, immediately after. Murzuphlus thereupon secured his own nomination to the throne, and cast the puppet-emperor Canabus into a dungeon.

The final struggle could not now be long delayed. There were conferences which came to nothing. Each side accused the other of foul play, and the points at issue—whether pecuniary or ecclesiastical—were such as admitted of no settlement. There was now no Emperor in Constantinople whom the Crusaders could recognize. The moment had come to seize the prize for one of their own number. There seems to have been some suggestion, not vigorously taken up, of reuniting East and West by the election of Philip of Suabia. The course nearest to this, which might lead ultimately to the same result, would have been to choose Philip's kinsman and friend, Boniface of Montferrat. But there were various reasons to the contrary, the principal, perhaps, being the jealousy of the Venetians against the Genoese, for Genoa was a near neighbour to Boniface.[1] A selecting committee of twelve, six Venetians and six "Franks" or other Westerners, was chosen and sworn in to appoint the best man possible. It was agreed that the Patriarch should be a Venetian if the Emperor were a Frank, and *vice versa*. Of the spoil, the Venetians were to have three-quarters, to reimburse them for

[1] See an article by Mr Fotheringham in the English "Historical Review" for January 1910.

their expenses. The territory was, for governmental purposes, to be divided so that the new emperor should have direct rule over one quarter with the two great palaces; the rest to be divided equally under Venetians and Franks, in fiefs. Thence comes the curious title used afterwards by Venice as "ruler of a quarter and half a quarter of the Empire of Roumania." The fief-holders were all to do homage to the Emperor, the Doge Dandolo being exempt from any such obligation.

These arrangements being made, the Crusaders prepared for an assault. Murzuphlus (the *Scowler*, as his name seems to signify) had alienated some loyal Greeks by his choice of ministers; especially he had removed the capable logothete, Nicetas Choniates the historian—a deed which brought retribution on his subsequent fame. Yet the last stand, at sea and then behind the walls on the north-east side of the city, was a brave one and seemed for a time likely to succeed. But the maritime skill of the Venetians and the valour of the Franks prevailed. On 12 April Constantinople was taken, and had to endure all the horrors of a sack. Plunder, murder, and even worse horrors were perpetrated all over the city. The amount of mischief done to the treasures of ancient art and of Byzantine architecture can hardly be estimated. The things most prized by the Crusaders were the relics of saints in which the city abounded. Later, in many distant parts of Europe sanctuaries had to be made and services ordained for the wonder-working spoils of the Queen City. The protecting powers of Constantinople seemed to have fled from her as her rulers and leading people had fled, or

were endeavouring to flee. Murzuphlus, with his wife Eudocia, a daughter of Alexius III., went out by the Golden Gate. Many nobles and patriots effected a retreat across the Bosporus or into Thrace, to seek, and sometimes to find, an abiding and congenial home elsewhere. On the ninth of May, Baldwin of Flanders was proclaimed Emperor in Sta Sophia.

The Pope was kept informed of the general course of events, and felt obliged to express some kind of satisfaction at the result. When, however, he realized the means by which Constantinople had been attained, he reproached the Crusaders with the utmost severity. Meantime, he endeavoured to bring it about that the Crusade should not even now be permanently diverted from its primary object. He still pressed the cause of the Holy Land. Practically, however, the interlude in the play had come to be regarded as the main plot.

Finlay[1] in his admirable account of these events, says that the treaty of the Crusaders and the Venetians, in March 1204 "put an end to the Eastern Roman Empire; for neither the Latin Empire of Roumania, established by the conquerors, nor the Greek Empires of Nicæa and Constantinople, which succeeded, have a just claim to be considered the legitimate representatives either of the policy or of the dignity of the Byzantine government." His statement as to the Latin Empire may certainly be accepted without qualifications. Empire indeed it hardly deserves to be called, since it was nothing but an unwieldy,

[1] "Hist. of Greece," Edition Tozer, vol. iii. p. 265.

decentralized, feudal state, and feudalism cannot be regarded as compatible with genuine imperialism. It was an abnormal parasitic intrusion of an alien aristocracy and an alien church into a land where the national church and the traditions of centralized bureaucratic government had taken too deep root to be permanently destroyed. But, though one may hesitate to differ from so great an authority, one may ponder a little before pronouncing Finlay's condemnation of what he calls "the Greek Empires of Nicæa and Constantinople." For it is because the Nicene Empire, and consequently that of the recovered Constantinople, did, in some measure, perpetuate the "policy" and "the dignity of the Byzantine government," that some modern scholars have thought their history worth studying. The following pages may help us towards deciding the question.

CHAPTER IV

THE BEGINNINGS OF THEODORE LASCARIS I.—HIS EARLY CONFLICTS AND HIS ESTABLISHMENT IN ASIA MINOR

THE Latin conquest of Constantinople was of the type necessarily followed by migrations of the conquered and by the rise into temporary power of national leaders among the refugees. There was no chance that the Greeks who remained in Constantinople would find scope for their activities —political, military, religious, or commercial— under Latin rule. Not only were the permanent causes of antagonism, which we have already examined, still there, but the recent events, with the dark deeds done and the destruction or removal of all that the citizens held dear, had intensified the difference between Greeks and Barbarians, or Romans and Franks, into a passionate desire for recovery on the one hand, a lust for further conquest on the other. Nor was there any friendly neighbouring state into which an element of Greek refugees could easily be assimilated. They naturally sought some regions amongst men of their own tongue and faith where they might find shelter until the tyranny were overpast. And they were not destitute of possible leaders. Of late, in the more distant parts of the Empire, especially in European Greece, the large land-holders had been able to maintain

considerable power, without much regard to the central authority. There were many families akin to that of the late emperors, and kinship had come to count for a good deal in the prospects of advancement. The newly founded feudal state established in Byzantium was unable to prevent, and not always unwilling to allow, the departure of the citizens. Accordingly, within a short time, we find Greek noblemen wielding certain powers and claiming more, in many Greek-speaking lands. Thus a certain Theodorus,[1] called Morotheodorus (mad Theodore) or Mancaphas, established himself in Philadelphia. Alexius Comnenus, cousin to the late Emperor,[2] made himself master of Sinope, Trebizond, and the intervening coast, while his brother David acquired Pontic Heraclea with Paphlagonia. In the west, a more prominent state was, as we shall see, founded by another scion of the imperial family, Michael Angelus; and there were other petty princes, some of Greek, some of Italian stock. But the state of which we have now to trace the fortunes had the advantage over the others in several ways, especially in the character of its founder, in his relation to the surviving ex-emperor, Alexius III., and in the nature of the capital which he chose for the temporary centre of the Empire.

Theodore Lascaris was at this time about thirty[3] years old. We have already seen that he held military command under Alexius III., and was vigorous in opposition to the Crusaders. He had been serviceable earlier in the reign, in helping to suppress the rebellion of a slippery Bulgarian ally,

[1] Acropolita, 7. Nicetas, 842.
[2] See Tree.
[3] Less if we follow Gregoras.

Ivanko. He came of good family, though none of his ancestors seem to have earned special distinction. It is noticeable that, in later years, many of his name appear as high officials and as men of letters. The qualities which all contemporaries notice in him are those of a warm and generous nature. He never spared himself in battle. He was lavish in expenditure, both on his friends and—when he came to have the chance—on public buildings. He seems to have been on good terms with the clergy, and to have been regarded by them as a heaven-sent champion of their oppressed church. He is also said to have been too easily overcome by passion, both of anger and of love. In appearance he was rather below middle height, with a dark complexion, a slight squint,[1] and a forked beard.[2]

Theodore had received in marriage Anna, a beautiful and spirited daughter of Alexius III. This Emperor had no sons, but, like most of the emperors, he made ample use of his daughters,[3] both to cement alliances with foreign courts and to secure the loyalty and the military support of leading Byzantine nobles. Anna was a widow at the time of her marriage to Theodore, having previously been the wife of her cousin Isaac Comnenus, who had been killed fighting the Bulgarians, leaving her with a little daughter.[4] Theodore seems to have stood well with his father-in-law before the Latin invasion, and had received from him the high-sounding title of *despotes*. A conjecture might be

[1] Or eyes of different colours: ἑτερόφθαλμος.

[2] Acropolita, ch. xviii., and Gregoras, ii. 1, 2.

[3] See Genealogical Tree.

[4] See Ducange, "Familiæ Byzantinæ" and his references to Nicetas, etc.

permitted that Alexius had regarded him as a possible heir, but this is very uncertain. Alexius was not an old man, and other possibilities of the succession may have been left open. In any case, it is clear that it was as *despot*, not as Emperor, that Theodore first tried to establish his sway in Asia Minor, though whether he was acting merely as a loyal subordinate to Alexius III., or with a view to his own interests, or—as seems most probable—in the intention of adapting himself to what fortune might have in store, is a question to which even the best authorities do not give an unambiguous answer.

According to most of the later historians, Theodore had from the first a certain claim to supreme power by virtue of a solemn election held in Sta Sophia immediately after the flight of Murzuphlus. We have a circumstantial account of the election from Nicetas, who is a first-hand authority for the capture of the city, and who was probably present at the ceremony, but unfortunately he gives a circumlocution instead of the Christian name of the chosen leader. He speaks of the candidates as "a pair of young men, discreet and courageous in war, Ducas and Lascaris, and the name of both was that of the Emperor who was champion (or founder—ἀρχηγός) of the faith." Now this appellation can only belong to Constantine, and we know, from Villehardouin, that Theodore had a brother Constantine, who was taken prisoner early in the war, but is afterwards found fighting on his brother's side in Asia Minor. It is rather strange that Constantine is not mentioned by the Greek historians with the other brothers of Theodore Lascaris, but they do

not come into the story till later, and Constantine may have died early. We have to choose between the two hypotheses, that Constantine was chosen,[1] but that his claim was allowed to drop, or—more probably—that Theodore was chosen and that the passage in Nicetas has been tampered with, or left, with or without intention, in obscurity. A chronicle based on Nicetas and on Acropolita [2] says that there were two good candidates, *both named Theodore.* The statement seems to be based on a manuscript of Nicetas, now rejected. If Constantine were chosen, it seems not altogether improbable that Theodore might prefer to ignore the fact, and that Nicetas, being his friend and admirer, might wrap it up in an enigma. It is even possible that Constantine may have yielded to his brother, and that afterwards it came to be believed that Theodore and not Constantine had been chosen.[3] One western writer—Robert de Cléry—mentions the election of a Lascaris, but does not give the Christian name. But the question is of less importance than it might seem, in that the Lascaris chosen refused to accept the insignia of royalty, and went out, accompanied by the Patriarch, to a place called Milion, which has been identified

[1] Accepted by Muralt: "Chronographie Byzantine."

[2] Commonly called Chron. Anon., pubd. by Sathas in "Bibliotheca Graeca Medii Aevi." Some MSS. of Nicetas read: "both named Theodore." The alternative readings are given in the Bonn edition.

[3] The rival Theodore or Constantine Ducas seems not to have been identified. If Theodore, can it have been the future Despot of Epirus? It seems not impossible that Theodore Lascaris may, in his conflicts with his rivals, have preferred to lay stress on other claims than that, to which some of them may have had some title, of popular election.

with Seraglio Point. There he made a spirited harangue to the soldiers, trying especially to impress upon the Varangian guards that they no less than the natives, would be ruined by a change of masters. Seeing, however, that he could not prevail with them, except by promising rewards which he would not be able to give, he took refuge in flight.

If Theodore was the chosen candidate, his refusal to accept the honour may have been prompted by a wish to obtain it in a more regular fashion later on. The Patriarch, Camaterus, who seems to have been a cautious man, may have counselled him to this effect. But in any case it seems clear that he never laid great stress on this election, though his chroniclers seem to date his years from 1204 rather than from his solemn coronation in 1206; but this may arise from unwillingness to allow an interregnum. We naturally wonder why Theodore, as the late Emperor's son-in-law and as military leader of known ability, had not been chosen on a still earlier occasion—when Murzuphlus obtained the title. But circumstances were complicated and proceedings tumultuary, so that conjectures become futile. A curious story is told by one of the annalists of the Crusade, Albericus Fontellanensis,[1] that Lascaris (he must mean Theodore, as he tells of his making himself Emperor at Nicæa) went to the Emperor Baldwin, and negotiated with him, promising to secure some of the Asiatic cities for the Latins. There is no *prima facie* impossibility in such an act of underhand diplomacy on Theodore's part, as it is certainly not contrary to the Byzantine standard of honour. But it requires corroboration, and seems

[1] Ed. Leibnitz, p. 441.

hardly consistent with subsequent events. If ever made, the negotiations had no result.

Accordingly Theodore Lascaris, whatever his immediate or ultimate intentions, left the city, gathered together what fugitives would follow him, and sailed, with his family, for Asia Minor, where he besought the citizens of Nicæa to receive him. When they refused, he made the bold proposal that they should receive his wife while he went his way. Thus the Nicæans would have hostages for his good intentions, and he might hope in time to obtain the city for his capital. The device proved successful.

Nicæa was eminently fitted for the rôle which Theodore had assigned to it, as the home of an empire in exile. As it is only about forty miles distant from Constantinople, whence, on a clear day, one can see the heights of Mount Olympus, which rise above it, it might serve as a rallying point for patriots and other fugitives. It occupied an important military position, at the junction of five great roads.[1] The country round was fertile, and capable of maintaining a vigorous agricultural population, while nature and art had combined to make it difficult of assault. By the extreme beauty of its situation, by its distinguished history, and by its imposing buildings, with its noble fortifications, it was capable of exercising a fascinating power on those who were coming to regard it as the centre of their political and social life, a power which

[1] See Ramsay: "Historical Geography of Asia Minor." At the present day, there is a good approach to it from the north. The road to Brusa, which Theodore followed when he left his wife behind him, did not apparently coincide with the road—or no road—of the present day.

NICÆA. LAKE ASCANIUS AND A PORTION OF THE CITY WALLS

increased with time under the fostering care of Theodore and his successors. It stands on the broad Lake of Ascanius, in a valley rich with fruit trees and other vegetation, abundantly supplied with water, and sheltered by noble chains of mountains. The chief glory of the place, now as then,[1] is the circuit of walls—its crown, as it was called—now sadly out of proportion to the head which it adorns. The heterogeneous character of these fortifications—each generation having used the débris of buildings raised by its predecessors—bears witness to many falls and risings again. The good omen of its name is probably accidental, since it was called after the wife of Lysimachus, but there may be a double meaning in it, since in these regions, Antigonus had overcome the brave resistance of Eumenes. The great victory, however, with which all Christians would associate it, was a bloodless one, that of the Catholic Faith over Arianism at the First Oecumenical Council in 325. Another Church council, held there in 787, in Iconoclastic times, has secured a temporary triumph to the Images. Nicæa the Hellenistic city had been built with what we should call American regularity, so that from a point in the city its four gates were visible. But from the panegyrics of its verdure, we are led to suppose that it was generally something of a garden city. Under the Early Empire, it had ranked as the capital of Bithynia, and residence of the Proconsul. Like other Asiatic cities, it had suffered repeatedly from earthquakes and from

[1] We have two panegyrics of the city from those who knew it a little later; one by Theodore Lascaris II.; the other by Theodore Methodites, who wrote under the earlier Palæologi.

the attacks of barbarian hosts. About 1080, it had succumbed to the Seljukian Turks, but the recovery of it by Alexius I. in the course of the First Crusade, was one of the fruits of his skilful diplomacy, and also a great grievance to the Crusaders. Among the buildings of Nicæa were many fine churches and monasteries. In one church (of the Koimesis) we may still admire some remarkably fine mosaics, especially a praying Madonna, and two figures of heavenly powers and dominions, dating from the eleventh and the ninth centuries respectively.[1] There were doubtless many such treasures in the buildings which have passed away. In short—to those who recognize the part that sentiment plays in human history, it may seem that the citizens of the Nicene Empire were happy in having a capital of which they might always feel justly proud.

Leaving the immediate neighbourhood of Nicæa, Theodore proceeded to Brusa, the Cheltenham or Bath of the Eastern Empire, which he made the centre of his operations. For two years (1204-6) he strove towards the subjugation of the country round it, using only the title of *despotes*, but demanding, apparently, that the places captured should be surrendered entirely to his authority. He gathered together an efficient and even imposing army, with a rapidity that may suggest a different ending to the Fourth Crusade if only he had received sufficient powers a year or two earlier. He even formed a fleet, as his plan included the subjugation of the Islands of the Ægean. We do not know how

[1] For these remarkable mosaics, see Ch. Diehl: "Études Byzantines," p. 353 seq. See also p. 291.

long it was before he was received into Nicæa,[1] nor whether the adhesion of that city was acquired by the accession of a patriotic party within the walls, or by the diplomacy of the Princess Anna. While he was winning his way in Bithynia and the adjacent provinces, he negotiated with the Sultan of Iconium, Gaiassedin Kaikhosrou.[2] This sultan seems to have been wavering in his policy of alliance between Alexius III., Theodore Lascaris, and the pretender Maurozomas in the Mæander Valley, to whom he had given his daughter in marriage. At some time in his chequered life he had been in Constantinople, and had received baptism, Alexius III. standing god-father. His change of religion can hardly have been seriously meant, but the elasticity of religious bonds in distinguished families is shown both in his own position and in that of his daughter, wife of Maurozomas. So far from repudiating his baptism on obtaining the sultanate, he used it to claim affinity with the imperial family, calling Anna, Theodore's wife, his sister. At present, the claims of spiritual brotherhood and sonship did not collide, as Anna was only the wife of a *despot.* Accordingly, he favoured the claims of Theodore. His son-in-law, Maurozomas, was reduced to the position of a tributary prince of the Empire.

Long before Theodore's power, even within its

[1] Acropolita, who tells us most about the earlier days of Theodore would leave on a casual reader the impression that he kept aloof from Nicaea for two years. But this is hardly possible.

[2] Perhaps not till next year, if, according to the received chronology, Kaikhosrou who had been dispossessed of his throne, was not reinstated till 1205, after the events about to be related.

first narrow limits, was consolidated, he had to cope with the forces of the Latin invaders. The Latin Emperor Baldwin naturally considered it his first business to apportion the territory under the sway of Byzantium into fiefs, so far as that had not already been done by arrangements made before the conquest. But any attempt to gain a footing on the other side of the Bosporus was, fortunately for Theodore, postponed till the late autumn of 1204. This was probably due in part to a serious difference between the Emperor Baldwin and Boniface, Marquis of Montferrat, which threatened to upset the whole equilibrium of the newly-founded state. Boniface had, as we have seen, married the widow of the Emperor Isaac, and may be considered to have had, hardly a Hellenic, but certainly an independent policy. Certain lands in Asia had been assigned him, but he preferred the city of Thessalonica with the adjacent country. He resented the action of Baldwin, who wanted to secure Thessalonica for the Empire before granting it as a fief; he negotiated on his own account with the Venetians, trading on promises made to him by Alexius IV., seized the strong city of Didymoteichos in Thrace, and laid siege to Adrianople. Meantime he seems to have acknowledged the claim to empire of his step-son Manuel, son of Isaac and Mary. It was only with much difficulty, and by great concessions on the part of Baldwin, that matters were smoothed over by some of the leaders of the Crusaders, and that Boniface consented to hold Thessalonica as a fief of the Empire. His loyalty was still somewhat uncertain.

The doings of Boniface are connected with the

later fortunes of the two ex-sovereigns of the Eastern Empire. Alexius V. (Murzuphlus) came to seek refuge in Mosynopolis with his father-in-law, Alexius III. But Alexius III. bore a grudge against him, chiefly, it was said, on account of his daughter, Eudocia, but perhaps also because of the imperial title which Murzuphlus had accepted. Accordingly he received him courteously and then had him blinded in a bath to which he had been invited, in spite of the cries and imprecations of his unhappy wife. But this was not the end of the troubles of Murzuphlus. He was afterwards captured by a body of Italians and sent captive to the Emperor Baldwin. According to the canons of western chivalry, he was worthy of a specially terrifying punishment, since he had betrayed and killed his lord, Alexius IV. Accordingly, after trial and condemnation, he was hurled down from one of the highest columns in Constantinople : a consistent end to a shifty and tumultuous life.

Meantime, Alexius III. determined to obtain the protection of his sister-in-law's husband, Boniface of Montferrat. By the influence of the ex-empress Mary, he was admitted into Thessalonica. He did not, however, remain on friendly terms with Boniface, and succeeded in making his way southward into Greece. An independent Greek nobleman, Leo Sgouros, who had made himself " tyrant " in Corinth, and ruled over the cities of the Isthmus, received the unhappy princess Eudocia in her fourth marriage.[1] Later on, Alexius was seized by Boniface who, it is said, intended to send him to the Emperor in

[1] *I.e.*, if she was married in succession to two kings of Servia —a father and a son.

Germany. But he never reached the imperial court. According to one account, he was imprisoned in Montferrat and afterwards ransomed. In any case he effected his escape from Europe to Asia, and we find him again at the court of the Sultan of Iconium.

In the distribution of fiefs, Nicæa had been assigned to Louis of Blois, brother of the Thibaud whose untimely death had prevented him from leading the whole Crusade. Louis sent over, in November, two gentlemen, Pierre de Bracieux and Payen d'Orleans, who landed at the port of Pegæ,[1] where there was a Venetian colony, and made that town their headquarters. Shortly afterwards, Henry of Champagne, the eminently capable brother of the Emperor Baldwin, also crossed the Bosporus, and there was hard fighting between his forces and those of Theodore and his brother Constantine Lascaris. Henry had secured the support of a community of Armenians, settled in the Troad. It is curious to notice that among the French knights, the strange literary devices by which pseudo-antiquarians had sought to find ancestors among the Trojan heroes, and to make out some connection between the capital of France and the lover of Helen, had bred a notion that the land belonged to them by right. "Troies fu à nos anchisieurs."[2] The Greeks made a brave resistance, and gained some advantages, but the western cavalry were too strong for them. Battles were fought at Pœmanenum and later at Adramyttium. Brusa stood a siege, but most of the cities of Bithynia and of the Troad fell into the hands of the Latins.

[1] For distinction between the port *Pegæ* and the inland *Pegæ*, see Meliarakes, Appendix I.

[2] Robert de Cléri.

Now, however, a new helper of the Greek cause appeared in the person of Joannitius, King of Bulgaria. Joannitius was the third of three brothers who had in succession ruled over the revived kingdom of the Bulgarians. This people had been reduced to entire subjection by the Macedonian emperors, but heavy exactions and needless affronts gave them provocation to rise under the brothers Asan and Peter, and assert their independence. Asan was chosen king [1] at Tirnovo, in 1186. He was soon after murdered, but his brother Peter, who had already held a lordship under him, succeeded to his dignity, and when he in turn met a violent death, the third brother Joannitius,[2] or Kalojohannes, succeeded as sole ruler. He seems to have been a capable and crafty man, and an intense hater of the Greeks, though he did not mind, after the conquest of Constantinople, fomenting discontent among the Greek subjects of the new Latin Empire. His most prudent step, however, was to obtain not only diplomatic countenance, but warm support from the Pope, by requesting the appointment of a patriarch from Rome, engaging to keep to the Roman discipline, and even placing his kingdom under the special protection of the Pope. Innocent had consented to a Bulgarian *primacy* which might or might not be regarded as equivalent to a *patriarchate*, and the primate from Rome crowned Joannitius as *King*. But Joannitius seems to have

[1] See, besides the Greek authorities, Jireček: "Geschichte der Bulgaren," though he is confused about the brothers' names. Also W. Miller: "The Balkan States."

[2] Asan I. is also sometimes called John I. It seems strange that there should have been two brothers John, but transcribers make havoc of names.

hoped for a yet higher title. He had been repulsed by the Latin Emperor, and was ready for a trial of strength with him.

A rising of discontented Greeks took place in Adrianople. The forces of the Latins were widely scattered. Baldwin sent word to his brother to come and help him, and marched out himself to besiege the rebel city. Henry left Asia and proceeded to Thrace, but he was too late. A great host of Bulgarians and Coumans [1] fell upon Baldwin and his army near to Adrianople—the place which had witnessed the death of another Roman emperor (Valens) in conflict with the Goths more than eight hundred years before. Baldwin is said to have been taken prisoner to Tirnovo. He was never seen again, unless an old man who appeared in western Europe many years after, to claim recognition from Baldwin's relatives, was really no ordinary impostor. Louis of Blois, the titular lord of Nicæa, was left on the field. Henry had abandoned all the places occupied by his forces in Asia, with the exception of Pegæ. His Armenians as well as most of the Crusaders he had led, followed him into Thrace. But all that he could do was to join the Crusaders, who were making an orderly retreat, at Rodestus, and to accept the regency of the Empire till Baldwin should reappear or his death be announced. He made a pathetic appeal to the Pope,[2] beseeching him to summon an army to retrieve the disaster. Innocent in return exhorted

[1] These people, of Asiatic origin, will concern us a good deal in the sequel.

[2] See Letters of Innocent III., lib. viii. pp. 129 and 131, and *Res Gestæ Inn.*, p. 131.

him to make peace with the Bulgarians, and wrote also to his beloved son Joannitius, urging—what was now most likely impossible—the liberation of Baldwin.

It may have been the defeat of the Latins, with the great relief felt on the retreat of the invaders from Bithynia, or it may have been some unknown communications concerning his father-in-law that now induced Theodore to take the perilous leap, and assume the title of Emperor instead of *Despotes*. We are told [1] that there was a meeting at Nicæa of the chief leaders of the armies and of the bishops of the various cities round, which decided that he ought to be crowned Emperor. The main difficulty was that there was no patriarch to perform the ceremony. John Camaterus, the last Greek Patriarch of Constantinople, had withdrawn to the kingdom of the Bulgarians,[2] was now living at Didymoteichus in Thrace, and refused to come on Theodore's invitation. Camaterus was a man of good repute, and apparently without ill-will to Theodore. It has been supposed [3] that he was of kin to the Empress Euphrosyne, and unwilling to offend her husband. Apparently, however, he did not object to retiring, and his place was filled by Michael Autoreanus, a man of wide learning, versed in Greek and also in other literature. It is an interesting point to observe, that Theodore had sent an invitation to prominent members of the Constantinople

[1] By Acropolita, 6-7.

[2] See Demetrius Chomatenus, *apud* Pitra: "Analecta Sacra Spicilegia Solesmensi," vol. xi. no. 146.

[3] See Meliarakes, "Ἱστορία τοῦ βασιλείου τῆς Νικαίας," chap. v. He refers to a letter of Michael Acominatus respecting a certain Camaterus related to the Empress. Mich-Ak, Letter 180.

clergy to come and witness and approve the choice of a patriarch (*not* to use the right of choice). Autoreanus shortly after performed the coronation.

From that day (in March or April 1206) [1] Nicæa was regarded by the Greeks inhabiting a considerable part of Asia Minor both as the seat of the Empire and the centre of the Church. Theodore himself, by his proclamations, and by the intercourse he maintained with patriots and learned men, ecclesiastic and lay, in near and distant parts, did all he could to keep his great idea before the people. He had still to conquer great part of the territory over which he had assumed the direct government. There were many claimants of the whole or of a part. A really able man was ruling in Constantinople. The Emperor to whom Theodore owed his special claim was on his way to seek the protection of the strongest non-Christian power. There seemed little chance of peace or of any cultivation of the arts of peace. But Theodore had made a brave beginning, and in his subsequent career we see how, amid all fluctuations of fortune, he pursued, with ultimate success, the goal for which he was bound.

The view which Theodore seems to have taken—certainly that which he wished his people to take—as to the character and authority of his rule, is embodied in a document drawn up in the form of an oration made by the Emperor himself, the real author being the chronicler Nicetas Choniates. The historical work of Nicetas Acominatus of Chonia (or Colossæ) has been frequently referred to above. Choniates is one of those historians whose story is made more vivid by the fact that they have

[1] I follow Muralt's *Chronographie Byzantine*.

taken part in its themselves. He had been in office under both the Angeli, and seems to have acquitted himself well in various missions to the provinces, and to have held high judicial functions. Like his elder brother Michael, Bishop of Athens, whose manful efforts on behalf of the Greek cause will concern us a little later, he was deeply imbued with a respect amounting to enthusiasm for old Greek history and literature, combined with an ardent belief in Greek Christianity. He had escaped with difficulty from the siege of Constantinople, chiefly through the connivance of a Venetian friend, carrying his younger children, and protecting as best he could his wife, who was about to give birth to another. On his way [1] he was called upon by the father of a beautiful girl, to prevent her being carried off by a ruffian ; and, by threats and adjurations, finally pretending that she was his wife, succeeded in liberating her. He tells how other girls were saved from violence by disfiguring their faces with dirt. The whole picture is a ghastly one, and certainly the historian's aversion to the Latins was not mitigated by his personal experiences. Happily his family all escaped unhurt, and he subsequently took up his abode at Nicæa, though he does not seem to have held any office there except that of public orator.

We have three of his orations dating from the Nicene part of his life,[2] the first being the one just referred to, probably written at a time shortly

[1] He tells the story of his escape in the last chapter (" Urbs Capta ") of his history. His brother Michael gives a rhetorical account of it in his memorial oration.

[2] Sathas, *Bibliotheca Medii Aevi*, vol. i.

after Theodore's coronation. It is called a *Silentium*, the name having been transferred from a *council* to a councillor's speech. The tone is markedly religious, though Nicetas was a layman. He makes the Emperor begin by describing the two-fold function of the trumpet, in calling soldiers to battle, Christians to fasting and prayer. It is his office to issue both kinds of summons. " For my Imperial Majesty (ἡ βασιλεία μοῦ) has been placed as father over the universal Roman state (τοῦ ῥωμαϊκοῦ πληρώματος), though late in time compared to others." He goes on to preach a sound moral sermon on the essential character of Christian fasting, as residing in abstinence, not from meat and drink, but from evil passions. He points to the terrible chastisement of Constantinople, and of the Western provinces, and declares that equally great calamities would have befallen the Eastern likewise, if God had not raised up his " Imperial Majesty " as a seed of further hopes. Like St Paul, he may boast and not be a fool. All men knew of his labours and journeyings and fastings, not to satisfy private ambition, but to save the cities of the East from this plague of locusts. Now he is called to deliver the Euxine also, and he demands the support of the people. He has been anointed, like David, who was king, first of Judah and then of all Israel. All will yet be well to those who trust in God. Behold the speedy departure of the Latin hosts from Asia. The city, the joy of the whole world, yet will be restored. The function of the Emperor is that of Moses or of Zerubbabel. The unity of the Empire means also unity in the Church. " There shall be one fold and one shepherd."

It may be objected to the significance of this proclamation that it represents the ideas not of Theodore Lascaris but of Nicetas Choniates. Yet, putting such significance at its lowest estimate, we have important facts as to the way in which Theodore's empire was regarded by the most ardent of his supporters, and as to the way in which he wished it to be regarded by all. And certainly Nicetas does not stand alone. His brother Michael seems to cherish precisely similar ideas, and we see an approximation to them in other contemporary writers, most notably in Nicolaus Mesarites, the champion of the Greek Church in Latin Byzantium.[1] It is clear that the Nicene Emperor did not mean to abate one jot of the dignity of the successors of Augustus and Constantine. In Church and in State, he was the symbol of unity and of discipline. But he was more than a mere symbol. His personal energy and efforts were manifested alike in his military expeditions, his governmental arrangements, and his religious actions and exhortations. His ecclesiastical position is very unlike that of even the least submissive of the western princes who acknowledged the authority of the Papacy. One looks in vain for any suggestion of obedience owed to pope or patriarch. There is no room for the ideas of Innocent III. But there is not as yet any appearance of subordinating religious interests to those of the State, since the power by which the State is to be saved and restored is based on loyal obedience to a divine vocation.

[1] See Heisenberg, "Nikolaos Mesarites" (Wurzburg, 1907), and "Analecta" (Munich, 1901); see also below, p. 270 *seq.*

CHAPTER V

FURTHER CONFLICTS OF THEODORE I. WITH RIVAL GREEKS, LATINS, AND TURKS

THEODORE LASCARIS made the most of the time of respite given him in his conflict with the Latin Empire by the battle of Adrianople and the devastating advance of the Bulgarians into Thrace. He seems to have signed a truce with Henry, though we only know of it from the statement [1] of its having been speedily broken. Henry was indeed in a critical position, as was the whole state over which (from the capture of Baldwin in April 1205 to his own coronation in August 1206) he held sway as *baux* or *moderator*. If the Bulgarian king had been able to keep the Coumans, his half-savage allies, in close and regular alliance, he would probably have advanced on Constantinople itself, but the Coumans seem to have retreated when bad weather and their own affairs required. Even so, however, Serrhæ, Philippopolis, and other flourishing towns suffered all the horrors of a sack, even after voluntary surrender. The Greeks of those parts were between two fires, but in the course of the summer of 1206, Henry persuaded them to submit to Constantinople, on condition that a certain Branas, brother-in-law of the King of France, but Greek by birth, should hold a lord-

[1] Of Villehardouin, ed. Wailly, 453.

ship comprehending Adrianople and Didymoteichus. This agreement involved a concession on the part of the Venetians, who had claims on Adrianople,[1] and who were almost as great a source of difficulty to Henry as the Bulgarians themselves. It was chiefly in ecclesiastical affairs that the high pretensions of the Venetians were manifested. If the Franks regarded the Greek clergy as aliens and heretics, the Venetians seem to have looked on the best clerical posts as rightful spoil of Venetian citizens. Pope Innocent was constantly urging fairness and compromise towards the Greeks, and the submission of all to the See of Rome, but it was impossible to arrive at an understanding, and when, in March 1206, a convention was made between the Papal legate, the Patriarch, the "dominus" Henry, and the barons of the "imperium Romaniæ," on the basis of a grant to the Church of one-fifteenth of all conquered lands, the Venetians stood aloof. The principality of "Cæsar" Branas had to sustain a renewed attack from the Bulgarians, but now, for a time, Franks and Greeks were working together, and the chief cities were momentarily relieved. Branas did not retain his power long enough to give us an example of how a Greek magnate could rule on Greek principles under Latin overlordship.

Another thorn in the flesh for Henry was Boniface of Montferrat, who had been making himself supreme in parts of Greece, and who always had a possible pretender to set up against the Latin Emperor—

[1] The treaty is published in Tafel and Thomas ("Urkunde der Venezischen Handelsgeschichte," no. clxii.). It is a concession to Branas (called Cæsar and Comnenus) from the Doge and people of Venice. There is no mention of Henry.

his stepson Manuel, son of his wife Mary and Isaac Angelus.[1] Among the principalities founded by the Crusaders in Greece proper was that of Athens, given as a fief to Otto de la Roche. The last Greek bishop of Athens for many years, Michael Choniates, already mentioned as brother of the historian Nicetas, withdrew before the storm, not for lack of courage (he had shown great patriotism in his efforts for the relief of the Athenians under the Angeli and much spirit in opposing the tyranny of Sgouros), but because resistance would have been ineffectual, and he was too thoroughgoing a Hellene to retain his see under Latin domination, even if such a course had been open to him. He took up his abode for the rest of his life, in the Island of Ceos.

The Peloponnesus had meantime suffered a rapid conquest at the hands of a fresh body of adventurers under Geoffrey de Villehardouin the younger and William de Champlitte, who founded the Principality of Achaia. This conquest was extended so as to comprise Argos, Nauplia, and Corinth. The Venetians had settled on points of the south coast and in many of the islands. Greece proper was hopelessly disunited and mostly feudalized.

Meanwhile Boniface returned north to defend his "kingdom" of Thessalonica. He found it best to reconcile himself with Henry, to whom he gave his daughter in marriage. For a time Thessalonica was saved for "Romania." The stormy career of Boniface came to an end in the course of 1207, when he was killed by a band of Bulgarians lying in ambush on Mt Rhodope. He left a young son,

[1] See Genealogical Tree.

Demetrius, under the guardianship of his widow. Mary was, as we have seen, a Hungarian by birth who had been married in succession to a Greek Emperor and to a cosmopolitan adventurer. Her own sympathies seem to have been Italian. Her chief minister was a Lombard, and her government showed no tendency to follow loyally in the wake of Constantinople. It needed all Henry's efforts to keep any kind of supremacy over the kingdom of Saloniki.

Meantime Theodore had had leisure to put down finally two of his lesser rivals in Asia and to restrain the powers of a third. Morotheodorus was driven from Philadelphia and another Greek governor, Sabbas, from the city of Samson (the old Amisos) where he had assumed authority. David Comnenus of Heraclea, a more formidable opponent, was trying to extend his power, and even had designs on the city of Nicomedia, whence he may have hoped to reach Nicæa itself. But his forces, under the command of a young man named Synademus, were surprised and put to flight by Theodore. Probably about this time Maurozomen, the Sultan's son-in-law, also suffered a defeat at Theodore's hands. In a laudatory oration delivered by Nicetas Choniates which probably belongs to this year, the orator tells how the Persians (the name is given more from its classical sound than from ethnic fitness), on hearing of his prowess desired to become his allies. For he had shown himself able to make cowards brave. He had brought help in the present, instead of promising it in the future (like Antigonus Doson). He had shown himself ready to be " accursed for his brethren's sake " like

the divine messenger of Tarsus. He had also, in Nicetas' estimation, become worthy of comparison with Alexander the Great. His strength was as that of the lion or the eagle. In fact all the resources of late Greek rhetoric are brought to adorn his exploits, and during this period it would be unfair to conclude from the ornate character of courtly or political eulogy that it was not an expression of genuine patriotic feeling.

If, as both Greek and French chroniclers would lead us to suppose, the Coumans, Wallachs, and Bulgarians who followed Joannitius were fiercer and more uncivilized than any of the nations opposed to them, it might have seemed a natural policy for the Greeks generally to come to some kind of understanding with their less barbarous foes in opposition to a common danger. Such a line of action had, as we have just seen, been forced on the Greeks in Thrace, and the conciliatory spirit as well as the perilous position of Henry might seem favourable to some kind of similar accommodation in Asia Minor. But it had never been a fixed and consistently followed principle among the Greeks to prefer alliances among themselves or with civilized neighbours to temporary combinations with barbarians. Thus it need not surprise us to find that Theodore Lascaris was ready to join hands with the savage Joannitius, with the Sultan, or with any other power that might, by causing a diversion of the Frankish troops, help his own schemes in Asia Minor, though his alliances, either with Bulgarians or Turks, were anything but permanent.

Of the earlier wars between Henry and Theodore —two worthy champions of their respective causes

—we learn the details almost entirely from the Frankish side. Villehardouin tells us [1] that as soon as the truce was broken (of course by Theodore) Henry sent certain notable warriors across to Pegæ, —almost the only place which the Latins had retained after succour had been sent to Baldwin. They proceeded to Cyzicus, now almost unfortified, where Pierre de Bracieux regarded himself as lord of the land. Another captain, Thierri de Loos, established himself in Nicomedia, and made the Church of the Holy Wisdom there into a fortress. Two other leaders fortified two castles—Carax and Cibotus, on the northern and southern shores respectively of the Gulf of Nicomedia. But the fortunes of the Franks in Asia were checked by the news that Joannitius—probably in collusion with Theodore—had laid siege to Adrianople. A large proportion of the troops were recalled for the Thracian war, though some leading men were left behind under Pierre de Bracieux and Payen d'Orléans in Cyzicus, where they had to withstand a vigorous attack from Theodore. He did not, however, persist in the siege, but proceeded by sea to attack Cibotus.[2] This place seems to have been important not only because of the new fortress, but from its position at the south end of a frequently used ferry, across the Gulf of Nicomedia. The news of the siege of Cibotus was brought into the dining hall of Henry, who had recently been occupied with his marriage festivities. The need seemed so urgent that he rose at once from his dinner-table, to organize a

[1] Ed. Wailly, 453 *seq.*

[2] Le Chivetot. Most historians identify this place with Cibotus, though Meliarakes makes it the same as Cius.

relief expedition, which he led himself. The efficiency of his forces (which comprised a good many Pisans and Venetians) and the celerity of his movements accomplished the desired end. The Greeks before Cibotus burned their ships and withdrew. The fortress, however, which had suffered much, did not seem to Henry worth retaining, and having embarked the garrison, he returned to Constantinople (April 1207).[1]

The fitfulness of the war in Asia was due, of course, to the necessity laid on Henry of carrying on hostilities simultaneously or alternately with Bulgarians and Greeks. Before long he had to arrange another expedition for the relief of Cyzicus, the siege of which had been renewed by Theodore's admiral, Steiriones. This again was successful, but once more Henry had to lead a relieving army to Nicomedia, which Theodore was besieging. Another temporary success and return to the capital was followed by yet another cry for help, as Thierri de Loos, riding out from Nicomedia to forage, had been taken prisoner. It is noticeable that the people of the country seem to have been all ready to take the Greek side. At length a truce for two years was arranged between Henry and Theodore, on the conditions that Cyzicus and the fortress (formerly church) of Nicomedia should he given to Theodore and by him dismantled, and that Thierri de Loos and other prisoners should be released.

It is possible that Henry would not have granted such easy terms if he had known how soon he was to be released from Theodore's European ally. Joannitius was killed while laying siege to

[1] See Ramsay, "Hist. Geog. of Asia Minor," p. 186.

Thessalonica, in the course of the summer of that year (1207). Report attributed the act to the device of his wife and the hand of a Couman warrior, but there was also a current belief that St Demetrius had struck him in punishment for his acts of sacrilege. He was succeeded by his son Borilas, a less formidable opponent, from whom the Latins were able before long to win back much of what they had lost. Henry, after the death of Agnes of Montferrat, married as second wife a daughter of Joannitius, or according to some accounts, of Borilas.

Villehardouin (whose guidance we lose after the death of Boniface and that of Joannitius) says of the struggles of the Latins in Thrace and Asia Minor, "Et bien tesmoigne Joffrois de Vile-Hardoin, li mareschans de Romenie et de Champaigne, qui ceste oevre traita, que onc en nul termene ne furent gent si chargiè de guerre, porce que il estoient espars en tant de leus." But Theodore was not much less "chargé de guerre" than his rival, and for him, too, the truces were mere breathing-times. Even when there was a doubtful respite from the side of Constantinople, David Comnenus still held Heraclea, and he endeavoured to strengthen his position by a treaty with the Latins, whose supremacy he seems to have recognized. His brother Alexius[1] must have been weakened considerably when Amisus,[2] or Samson, came, on the defeat of Sabbas, into Theodore's hands, and he sunk into vassalage to the Turkish power. But it was this power that now became threatening. We do not know the causes which determined the Sultan Gaïaseddin Kaikhosrou

[1] See *supra*, p. 53. [2] See Map.

to assert by arms the claims of Alexius III. against his son-in-law. Nor have we any means of conjecturing whether Theodore and his wife attempted to come to any agreement with the late Emperor which might have warded off the Mussulman attack. But we do possess a letter dated March 1208, written during the period between the Greek and the Turkish conflicts of Theodore, addressed to him by Pope Innocent, which shows that he had been endeavouring to strengthen his position by diplomatic means. Most unfortunately, the letter to which the Pope's is a reply is not extant, but it can be reconstructed from that answer, as least as to general tenour.

Innocent's letter [1] does not acknowledge Theodore as Emperor, nor even as Despotes, but is addressed : "Nobili viro Theodoro Lascari." It is written with a directness amounting to rudeness which contrasts strikingly with the Greek epistolary style of the period, and probably with Theodore's own communication, since it begins by saying that the Pope has had to draw up the Epistle under heads, in consequence of the prolixity of Theodore's. Theodore has complained of the conduct of the Crusaders in diverting their arms against a Christian city and government, and of the sacrilege, perjury, rape, and other violence which have disgraced the capture of Constantinople. Further, he had desired the Pope to bring about a settled peace, instead of temporary truces, between himself and the Latins, by sending a special legate for the purpose, who should acknowledge the sea as the natural boundary between them. If this were

[1] Inn., xi. 47.

done, Greeks and Latins could unite against the "Ishmaelites" (a comprehensive term for Mussulmans). If this were impossible, he felt excused in entering into alliance with Wallachians, as with pagans and foreigners generally. It is impossible to think that Theodore was quite serious in his propositions. He cannot have given up for ever the recovery of the Queen City, which was always regarded by the Greeks of Nicæa as their goal of aspiration. It seems more probable that he wrote with a vague hope of obtaining help from the West against the Sultan. Or he may, by his accusations of the Latins, have merely wished to widen the breach now beginning to heal between them and the Pope. In any case, Innocent gave him no encouragement. True, he made no effort to defend the shameful deeds of the Crusaders, but he gives the excuses—lame enough—which they themselves have made on the plea of necessity. He goes on to say that whether personally justifiable or not, the Latins have been the instrument of Providence in the chastisement of the Greeks for not acknowledging the supremacy of St Peter; and for these the only right course now lies in humble submission. Their duty is to love their enemies and to receive humbly the legate whom the Pope will send to settle terms. The legate will be instructed to obtain favourable conditions from Henry, though the subjection of Theodore to his overlordship will be quite essential.

It is evident from this letter, that however anxious Innocent may have been to conciliate the Greeks on religious grounds, he had no notion of even tolerating an independent Greek empire. The

negotiation was hopeless from the first, and probably only the presence of danger to his whole power and his very existence could have led Theodore to make any attempt in this direction.

In view of the danger from the East, Theodore managed to secure the assistance of a force of eight hundred Italian auxiliaries. But his chief reliance was on his own subjects. In the summer of 1210, Gaïaseddin Kaikhosrou took Attalia, and advanced towards Nicæa at the head of a large army, carrying with him his guest, Theodore's father-in-law, the ex-Emperor Alexius III. He sent forward an embassy to Theodore, announcing their arrival, and accusing him as usurper of the Imperial throne. Theodore called an assembly—whether it was a meeting of the Senate or of the Army we are not told—and put the question: Would they keep to him or would they prefer Alexius? With one voice they promised to live or die with Theodore. The invading host poured into the valley of the Mæander and laid siege to Antioch. Theodore and his army marched out to meet them, and a very decisive battle was fought near that city. The Italians advanced first, and being overpowered by the numbers of the enemy, were cut to pieces, all fighting gallantly. A like fate might have overtaken the rest of the army if the Sultan had not made a direct attack on Theodore himself. He unhorsed him, and was calling to his attendants "Carry him off!" when Theodore aimed a dexterous sword-cut at the legs of the huge mare on which the Sultan was mounted, and brought the rider to the ground. The Sultan "fell as from a tower," and his head

was cut off by one of the soldiers near.[1] As usually happens with oriental armies, the death of the leader brought the discomfiture of the whole host. The army retreated, and Theodore was left in possession of the persons of his father-in-law Alexius and of Alexius' nephew Manuel, stepson to Boniface of Montferrat. These were treated with humanity. Alexius retreated for the rest of his life to the monastery of Hyacinthus. Manuel seems to have died at Nicæa a couple of years later.[2] A peace was made with the Turks which seems to have been lasting.[3]

This advantage on the part of Theodore must have caused a deep anxiety to the Franks, though Henry, having regard particularly to the slaughter of the Italians on the Greek side, affected to consider the battle a disaster to his opponents. He acknowledged that Theodore himself did not so regard it, as, in a letter [4] which he wrote soon after (dated January

[1] Gregoras says that Theodore cut it off and raised it on a spear, but the narrative of Acropolita seems here to be preferred.

[2] The anonymous chronicler already referred to says that Alexius was blinded by the desire of the Senate. This may conceivably be true, but it is not stated by Acropolita, nor, so far as I am aware, by any other authority. Manuel is not mentioned by Acropolita, but an inscription found in Nicæa is regarded as his epitaph. The inscription is given by Meliarakes, pp. 84, 5. The difficulty is that the πρίγκιψ Μανουὴλ of the inscription died in 1212, at the age of thirty-five, whereas Manuel, the son of Isaac and Mary, can hardly have been born before 1186. [This point has, I find, been brought out in Gerland's "Lateinisches Reich."]

[3] *I.e.* if, according to Fallemeyer, the story of the capture of Lascaris by the Sultan later on ought really to belong to Alexius Comnenus, and is due to a confusion of names on the part of the oriental writers.

[4] The letter is published in "Thesaurus Novus Anecdotorum," vol. i. of Martens and Durant, p. 821 *seq.* Henry describes

1212) he complained of the undue elation and conceit of Lascaris in sending round proclamations to announce his success, in order to win more people to his side. A very jubilant oration of Nicetas Choniates sets forth the triumph over the Mussulman host, and one may suspect that some of the proclamations to which Henry refers derived colour and eloquence from that source (though *not* the expression about "delivering the land from Latin dogs"). As to what happened, it is difficult to judge, since the triumphant issues of Henry's renewed efforts as recorded by himself are omitted or can hardly be identified in the Greek chroniclers. Henry, in his letter to his friends, tells them how Theodore had attacked the Hellespontine Pegæ, perhaps the last place left to the Latins in Bithynia, and how the approach of the Latins had urged him to an unseemly flight. There had been expectation of a battle on the River Luparcus (identified with the Rhyndacus), but though greatly superior in numbers, the forces of Theodore had been rapidly put to flight, while not one soldier on the Latin side had been mortally wounded.

It was probably a year or two later, in the course of the year 1214,[1] that a very serious invasion of Asia Minor was made by Henry, and that the cities of Pœmanenum and Lentiana were taken

therein his successes as against Theodore, Borilas of Bulgaria, and his opponents in Thessalonica. The letter is addressed to his *friends*, not, as Meliarakes says, to the Pope.

[1] Following chronology of Muralt and Meliarakes. I cannot feel sure that this campaign is not to be identified with that described by Henry. Acropolita does not seem to care much about chronology, and in speaking of these sieges he is noting chiefly the character and policy of Henry.

after prolonged sieges. The chief Greek captains who fell into Henry's hands were held to ransom. These included a brother of Theodore, and a son-in-law of his, belonging to the great family of the Palæologi. The soldiers were incorporated into his own army, and placed under officers of Greek race. It was probably now that Henry, wishing to put an end for a time to the necessity of these perpetual inroads into Asia Minor, consented to a treaty with Theodore, marking out a definite frontier.

By this treaty[1] certain regions were definitely ceded to Theodore, and others declared to be under Latin rule. The arrangement is thus summarized by Sir William Ramsay[2]: "The latter (Theodore) possessed the country from the Kaikos valley southward and from Lopadion eastward. The Franks had the north-west corner of Mysia, including the whole of Kiminas and even Akhyraous; Akhyraous was the extreme limit of their territory." Theodore was to have Neocastra, which had originally consisted of the fortresses of Chliara, Pergamus, and Adramythium, but Chliara and Pergamum are both specially mentioned, and with them probably went that part of the valley of the Caicus. Calamos, which "is the northern limit of the theme Neokastron,"[3] was to be left uninhabited. He was to have Kelbianon, which is equivalent to a good deal of the valley of the Cayster; also Opsicia, in Phrygia, the centre of a theme, and Magidia,

[1] See Acropolita, c. 15. He puts his account of it *before* the stories of the sieges of Pœmenenum and Lentiana.

[2] "Hist. Geog. As. Minor," p. 159. See map.

[3] Sir W. Ramsay, p. 129.

a fortress near it. In the part beyond Lopadion, which Theodore held, Nicæa and Brusa are particularly mentioned.

It is to be regretted that we have not the text of the treaty. On the one hand, it would have been interesting to know how far each party recognized the imperial authority of the other over the lands ceded. And—far more important—it would be desirable to have a stricter territorial delimitation than Acropolita gives us. Following him, we get no indication of a scientific frontier. Theodore, of course, seems to have had the best of the bargain, but the retention of a portion of Mysia by the Latins must have left him with a side perpetually vulnerable, especially as certain places occupied by his rivals were connected with his own by excellent roads. One is inclined to think that though both parties were weary of war and wished for some temporary agreement, neither had relinquished the hope, for himself or his dynasty, of ultimately recovering the whole Empire, of which certain portions were for the time abandoned. There seem to have been no provisions as to the islands, the possession of which would probably have in most cases to be discussed with the Italian republics.

The signing of this treaty—the treaty of Nymphæum — must have been disastrous to the prospects of David Comnenus. Deserted by the Latins, in constant apprehension from the Turks, and unsupported by his brother Alexius (whose dominions also were constantly threatened on the Turkish side), he soon succumbed to Theodore's power, and the lands he had ruled over became a

part of the Nicene Empire and greatly extended its coast line. Whether David himself met his fate at the hands of Greeks or of Turks is doubtful. In any case, we meet him no more. About the same time Sinope, in the territory ruled over by Alexius, was taken by the Turks, and Alexius himself fell into their hands.[1] From that time the Greek rulers of Trebizond, though they might call themselves emperors, acknowledged the suzerainty of the Sultan of Iconium till the power of that dynasty was overthrown by the hosts of the Mongols.

It may have been with a view to obtaining the support of another Christian power in the East against the Turks that Theodore sought a matrimonial alliance with Leo, an Armenian prince or king who ruled, not over any of the districts called Armenia in classical times, but over a portion of Cilicia, with the city of Tarsus and probably Adana. The Empress Anna was dead, and had left Theodore no sons (their two boys having died young), though there were three daughters. Theodore asked for and obtained Leo's daughter in marriage. A short time after he repudiated her, although she had borne him a son.[2] The reason for his action is not told by the Greek chroniclers, but an ingenious theory, based on a comparison of Eastern and Western sources, suggests that the Armenian king wanted to marry his daughter elsewhere and sought to put Theodore off with his niece, and that

[1] See Finlay, iv., p. 326, who follows Fallemeyer in rejecting the story of the captivity of Theodore Lascaris. The names of Lascaris and Alexis, in oriental guise, are much alike and easily confounded.

[2] See below, p. 115, note.

Theodore retaliated by sending the lady home.[1] It was somewhat strange that Theodore should have been so easily duped, and that the truth should have come to light so long after. But the question is not of great importance, as the child of the marriage does not figure in history. Theodore soon had other matrimonial projects in view.

But before we consider these projects, or the changes which took place among the contending leaders during the latter days of Theodore, we must go back to notice the rise of a formidable power in the West, which, though it does not seem to have collided much with Nicæa during Theodore's reign, was to become the chief rival of his successors for the headship of Hellas, and was brought earlier into conflict with the Latin Empire of Constantinople. This was the despotat of Epirus, founded by Michael Angelus Comnenus, soon after Constantinople had been conquered by the Crusaders.

The Angeli of Epirus, like the emperors Isaac II. and Alexius III., were descended from Theodora, younger daughter of Alexius II. (Comnenus), and her husband, Constantine Angelus.[2] John and

[1] See Meliarakes, p. 130. He cites (1) a letter of the year 1213 from the Patriarch Autoreanus to the King of Armenia, Cilicia, and Isauria, promising that the marriage shall be solemnized with full ecclesiatical rites. (This is quoted from "Byz. Chron.," vol. iv., p. 164); (2) the statement of Armenian chroniclers that the lady's name was Philippa, and that she was widow of an Armenian noble, and daughter of Reuben I. of Armenia; and (3) the accepted fact that John of Brieme married a daughter of Leo (see continuation of Matthew of Paris). *Cf.* an allusion to that Armenian marriage in an oracle attributed to Leo the Wise, and quoted by Heisenberg, *Byz. Zeit.*, xiv. p. 176 (article on cult of John Vatatzes).

[2] See Tree. The family connections of the Angeli are given with great variety by different writers. I follow mainly

Andronicus (not the Emperor), the sons of this marriage, had held high civil and military appointments, but had not always been very successful. Michael was the illegitimate son of John, whose other children seem to have taken the surname *Ducas* from their mother, and the same name was adopted by Michael himself. Thus the three great surnames of *Comnenus*, *Angelus* and *Ducas* were piled together on the members of this family. Of all the names, Comnenus was the most dignified, and was in a fair way to become a title in itself.

Michael lived an adventurous life from his youth. He is said to have been among the Greek hostages handed over by Isaac Angelus to Frederick Barbarossa, during Frederick's crusade in 1190. We find him a few years later sent to collect the revenue from the city of Mylasa in Caria, and availing himself of the opportunity to desert the service of Alexius III. for that of the Sultan, under whom he held a governorship in the regions of the Mæander. According to Choniates, his rule was tyrannical and rapacious. He knew, however, the art of advancing in the world by attaching himself to a rising power, and deserting old allies for new ones as circumstances might suggest. Thus he attached himself to the fortunes of Boniface of Montferrat, until an oppor-

Ducange ("Familiæ Byzantinæ") and his authorities. But even he is not always clear. He makes the statement that Michael's father married Zoe Ducæna on the authority of Doutreman, but does not seem quite certain about it. For the statement that Michael was a hostage to Barbarossa, the writers refer to the "Expeditio Asiatica" of Frederick, but I cannot find it in the lengthy document in Pertz, xvii. Both Finlay and Bury say that Michael was son of Constantine, uncle to Alexius III.

tunity was afforded him of acquiring independent power. Such an opportunity was offered by the unsettled state of the north-west part of Greece, where a Byzantine governor, bearing the strange name of Sennacherib, held sway. Michael slipped away from the crusading army, reached the town of Arta, and secured it for himself. He married a wealthy Greek lady, probably the widow of the late governor,[1] and extended his sway till it comprehended Ætolia, Nicopolis (about equivalent to the ancient Epirus), the coast nearly as far as Dyrrhachium, and the island of Corcyra or Corfu. In spite of his earlier differences with Alexius III., that Emperor, when a fugitive, attempted to make his way into Michael's territory. The attempt failed through Boniface's capture of Alexius, who was, however, soon liberated, and, as we have seen, took refuge with the Sultan of Iconium. But the ex-empress was received at Arta, Michael's capital, and died there. Meantime Michael furnished his cousin with provisions, or at least allowed him to be supplied. He was not, however, drawn into a war with Theodore Lascaris, but took part with the Greeks in the Morea against the invading Franks. At a battle fought near Moden (or Methone, on the Messenian coast) he was defeated, but he seems not to have lost his general prestige. For a time, after the death of Leo Sgouros, he seems to

[1] The marriages of Michael are not less problematic than his descent. The chief original authorities for his history are Nicetas Choniates, 700 and 841; Acropolita, 8 and 14; Villehardouin (Wailly), 301 and 328; Henry of Valenciennes, 584 and 689 *seq.*; also the very confused life of St Theodora, wife of Michael II., by Job, in C. P. L.; some letters of Innocent III.; and certain treaties in Tafel and Thomas.

have been accepted as ruler of Corinth. The crusading leaders in Greece were anxious to secure him as a vassal, the city of Venice treated with him as an independent power, and the Emperor Henry, after experiencing a good deal of trouble from the subjects of Michael, agreed to a treaty by which Michael was to do homage to himself, and give his daughter in marriage to his brother Eustace. The advantage would seem to have been all on Michael's side, since the form of doing homage was no indignity and the gain of recognition was considerable. Nevertheless, Michael soon recommenced his hostilities, and his death in 1216 by assassination would have been felt as a relief, if his successor had not proved to be a man of at least equal capacity to himself.

This successor was his brother, Theodore—an Angelus on his father's side, a Ducas on his mother's, a Comnenus on his grandmother's. He had been with Theodore Lascaris in Asia, and of considerable service to him in establishing his power. Michael, a short time before his death, had sent to Lascaris requesting his brother's presence, and Lascaris had let him go, securing first, as far as he could, his subsequent subordination by insisting on his swearing allegiance [1] to himself and to the emperors who should succeed him. How far Theodore Angelus kept this promise will appear later. During the reign of Theodore Lascaris, there seems to have

[1] Acropolita, 14. Meliarakes discredits this story by citing a letter of Bishop George Bardanes of Corcyra to Germanus, Patriarch of Nicæa. As, however, the object of this letter was to minimize the power of Theodore Lascaris, its statements may be received with caution.

been no collision between the two Greek powers, while the despot of Epirus increased his territory at the expense of the Bulgarians and the Venetians. He made himself master of Dyrrhachium, which, as we have already seen, had long been a bone of contention between East and West.

The Angeli (or Comneni) of Epirus have naturally fared badly at the hands both of crusading historians and of Greek writers attached to the Nicene court. That they were shifty in their alliances and sometimes cruel in their mode of warfare is hardly to be doubted. But the work involved in founding the Despotate shows courage, resource, and pertinacity, and some modern historians [1] are inclined to give them full credit for the achievement of their difficult task. They ruled over a mixed population of Greeks, Wallachs, Albanians and other peoples, and succeeded in forming bands of hardy brigands into something like a national force. Of their internal government little is known, but in the general contrast they exhibit to the Franks whom they opposed, they might seem to be worthy of the title of Hellenic champions, and some writers would, in this respect, class them with the Lascarid princes. They were, however, less consistent than the latter as representatives of the Eastern Church, and they certainly did less for the maintenance of Greek culture. But this point will concern us in the following chapters. Here we must notice how Theodore the Despot brought about a catastrophe in the Latin Empire of Romania (or Constantinople).

[1] Especially Finlay (vol. iv., ed. Tozer), Meliarakes, and Romanes.

In June, 1216, Henry of Constantinople died—by the machinations, it was said, of his Bulgarian bride. His death was certainly a calamity for the Latins—possibly for the Greeks likewise, since his strong but conciliatory policy might have succeeded, if any policy ever could, in filling up the breach between East and West. The empire was supposed to be elective, and there was no candidate whose claims, by birth or distinction, outweighed all others. In these Eastern monarchies or lordships we often find—as in the case of the Norman conquerors of England—that the old and the new territories of a family are divided between the heirs. In this case the successor chosen by the barons was Peter of Courtenay, Count of Auxerre,[1] who had married Yolande, sister of Baldwin and Henry. He was in France at the time, but proceeded to the East by way of Italy. He was crowned in Rome by Honorius III., successor to Innocent, who performed the ceremony in *San Lorenzo fuori i Muri*, with the view of emphasizing the fact that the Empire of Romania was not the Empire of Rome—a distinction which might have been obscured if an Eastern Emperor had been crowned in St Peter's. Peter had already shown zeal for the cause of Latin Christianity in the East, and he probably accepted his office as a fresh call to crusading enterprise. But his first action was at least as much dictated to him by his indispensable allies, the Venetians,[2] as by his own ideals. He

[1] See Tree.

[2] This point is clearly brought out in the Chronicle of Robertus Altissodorensis, in Bouquet's "Recueil," vol. xviii. See also in Norden, "Papstthum und Byzanz."

determined to travel to Constantinople by way of the Despotate of Epirus, and effectually to curb the power of Theodore Angelus. Accordingly, he embarked at Brundusium, and sent his wife on to Constantinople with some of their children—not his two eldest sons, who had been left behind in France—while he sailed across the Adriatic, and landed a little to the south of Dyrrhachium. He next proceeded to lay siege to that place, but Theodore Angelus was prepared for him, and he was obliged to retreat. In the mountains of Albania the first struggle took place; and then—by fair fight, according to the Greek, by treachery according to the Latin reports—the newly-made Emperor fell into the hands of his foes. His fate is as mysterious as that of Baldwin, and was probably the same—a speedy death in prison. Meanwhile Yolande, who seems to have inherited the intelligence and energy of her house, conducted the government of the Empire of Constantinople. She died in August 1219, and her second son, Robert, succeeded to the throne.

It was during the government of Yolande that Theodore Lascaris carried out the new matrimonial project already alluded to. There can be no doubt that he hoped for the ultimate recovery of Constantinople for the princes of his dynasty, and if such an issue came about by diplomatic and peaceable means, it was highly to be desired. Accordingly he sought and obtained in marriage Mary, one of the daughters of Peter and Yolande. Some accounts represent him as actually urging the claim during the vacancy of the throne, before the succession of Peter's son Robert, but the statements of

chroniclers [1] on which these accounts are based are so confused that it is difficult to be certain of more than an agreement between Theodore and Robert, on the arrival of the latter, comprising the liberation of certain prisoners.

Meantime Theodore strengthened himself by an alliance with the Venetian Podesta in Constantinople. In the document,[2] which is dated August 1220, it is interesting to see that Theodore is recognized as Emperor, *semper Augustus* and so forth, and that he does not mind recognizing the Doge of Venice as lord (depote) of the Empire of Romania, and as sovereign (dominator) of a quarter and half-quarter of that Empire. Both parties secured that their merchants were to be free from arbitrary dues or seizure of goods on death, and neither power was to copy the coin types of the other.

Theodore gave one more proof of his eagerness to retain the friendship of the rulers of Constantinople by proposing the marriage of his daughter Eudocia to the young Emperor Robert. It is hardly to be supposed, however, that he actually intended to make Robert his heir, in preference to his capable Greek son-in-law, John Vatatzes, husband of his daughter Irene. In any case, marriage was opposed by the Nicene patriarch as within the prohibited degrees, and never took place. The proposition of this alliance was one of the last diplomatic acts

[1] Especially the rhymed chronicle of Phil. de Mousques, published in the series of "Chroniques des Croisades," and also in the "Chroniques de la France." (The important passages in Mousques are given in the edition Reiffenberg, vol. ii., pp. 405, 6.)

[2] Published by Tafel and Thomas, ii. 205. Meliarakes puts the Treaty in 1219.

of Theodore, whose extremely active life came to an end during the summer of 1222. But before we can make any survey of his achievements or of the general results of his reign, we must consider rather more in detail an important aspect of the Nicene Empire—its bearing on the ecclesiastical relations of the Greeks of Asia and Europe.

CHAPTER VI

ECCLESIASTICAL POLICY OF THEODORE LASCARIS I. —HIS DEATH

THE main principle of Theodore's policy was the same in matters ecclesiastical and civil. He stood for Hellenism, unity and authority. He regarded the position and the sphere of action now occupied by his government as restricted and temporary, but as a prelude to better things. The empire in exile would one day recover the Queen City, and the Patriarch—still called *of Constantinople*, never *of Nicæa*—would again be the highest ecclesiastical person among Greek Christians. The continuity might have been more evidently maintained if the patriarch, John Camaterus—who had left the city at about the same time as Theodore himself—had entered into his ideas and furthered his plans. But Camaterus, as we have already seen,[1] had preferred to seek refuge among Bulgarians or subdued Greeks. Perhaps he may rank as one "che fece per viltate il gran rifiuto." But, after all, a Greek Patriarch was not a Roman pope, and it is probable that Autoreanus, who crowned Theodore, was at least as capable a man as Camaterus. Unfortunately for Theodore's ideas, Autoreanus was not acknowledged by a good many Greeks who had never cast off their obedience to his predecessor, but who,

[1] See above, p. 67.

on his death, had no scruple against recognizing the Latin patriarch, the Venetian Morosini. If Camaterus had gone to Nicæa, died there, and been succeeded by Autoreanus, or some other Greek canonically appointed, the Nicene patriarch might have proved a more formidable rival to Morosini and his successors than was actually the case.

But it was not only the patriarchal throne that Theodore desired to see established as the palladium of his Empire. All that the Greek Church stood for among those nourished in its bosom : old apostolic traditions ; strangely mixed survivals of pagan civilization ; zeal for orthodoxy ; championship of Christianity against the Turks ; close union of secular with religious authority ; reverence for monastic ideals ; devotion of learning to religious purposes and permeation of learning by religious ideas ;—all this was sought and to a certain extent realized in the Empire of Nicæa. Patriotism, piety, and erudition appear as the naturally combined allies of the Lascarid house. The connection between attachment to one's country and zeal for one's religion has always been strong enough amongst the Greeks, and is so even at the present day. But among the Greeks there has also been perpetually found that centrifugal force which dominates their history in ancient times and has been but slowly overcome in later ages. The passion for autonomy which belonged to the ancient Greek states is found again in some of the old Greek churches. But this disintegrating force was not so strong under Theodore as it becomes under his successor.

Meantime we see that among the Greeks who felt

bereft for a time of Church and State alike by the events of the Fourth Crusade, different attitudes were assumed towards the ruling powers according to the strength or weakness of the sufferers. A good many succumbed and acknowledged the papal supremacy. Some of the chiefs or despots, like Michael of Epirus, tried to get the papal power on their side against their opponents.[1] The kings of Bulgaria, who had a good many Greek subjects, and whose Church had in earlier times looked to Constantinople as its head, followed a similar policy, though, like the Epirots, they were ready to change sides from motives of expediency. Meantime a considerable body of clergy and laity, with a large number of monks, sought for a workable compromise. They did not object to living under the conciliatory rule of Henry, nor to acknowledging some ecclesiastical deference as due to the Pope, but they were strongly attached to their own ritual, while they suspected the Latins of heresy and had only too surely experienced their " barbarism." Towards the Greeks in this middle position, Innocent III. had a policy which may be summed up in three phrases: in doctrinal differences—patience and persuasion; in ritual—toleration; in obedience—absolute inflexibility. The Crusaders in general were hardly able to rise to his standpoint. The question of doctrine does not seem to have counted for so much in this as in other controversies—or perhaps it seems to have been rather a sign or symbol of difference than a radical cause of dissension.

[1] This does not seem to have been the case with the despots of Trebizond and Heraclea. But we know very little of the churches under their sway.

The diversity in ritual loomed large in the complaints made by each side of the conduct of the other. To the plain man, unauthorized dealings with the powers above have generally savoured of magic, and altars polluted by such dealings have seemed to require purification. The crucial question of obedience was complicated by the particular signs of submission sometimes demanded by the Pope's emissaries, which were far more humiliating than anything required by the Pope himself. A short account of the two most important embassies sent by Innocent to Constantinople, and of the consequent discussions, in which at least one representative of the Nicæan Church took part, will show what the difficulties were and how far they were likely to prove soluble.[1]

The first mission was that of Benedict, Cardinal of Sta Susanna (1205-7). He acted in conjunction with two other cardinals, Peter (St Marcellus) and Soffred (St Praxedis), already in Constantinople, but he held a special commission from the Pope for the reunion of the Churches. The intentions of

[1] For a full and lucid treatment of the whole subject, see W. Norden, "Papstthum und Byzanz," Bk. II. Some of Norden's sources are not very accessible. The chief authority for the mission of Cardinal Benedict is the report of the Greek interpreter, Nicolas of Otranto. It has been published in Russian by Bishop Arsenij (1896). The only full account of the mission of Cardinal Pelagius is the report given by the Bishop of Ephesus, who represented the Greek side. It has been published only in a Russian periodical, of which Dr Norden obtained a copy by private favour ("P. u. B.," p. 184 and p. 216). Since Norden wrote, fresh light has been thrown on persons and proceedings by the identification of this Bishop of Ephesus with Nicolas Mesarites. See Heisenberg, "Nic. Mes."

the Pope were set forth in a letter [1] to the Emperor Baldwin, recommending the Legate to his hospitality. In this letter Innocent shows no disposition to compromise the questions of doctrine and discipline. The Greeks in their teaching as to the Holy Ghost have "dishonoured the Son," and thus also dishonoured the Father. They have rejected "the Head," which is Cephas, and are suffering the punishment of the wicked husbandmen in the Parable. Of their vagaries in ritual there is no special mention, though a hope is expressed that they will return to the institutions of the Holy Roman Church, and that Ephraim and Judah will join to eat the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

Benedict seems to have exercised his powers in a large-minded way. He held consultations or discussions in three places: in Thessalonica (then, of course, under Boniface), in Constantinople, and in Athens. Among those who met him in Thessalonica was the Bishop of Athens whom we have already mentioned, Michael Acominatus.[2] Athens was already "widowed" of its bishop, and was soon given over to a Frenchman, Bérard, apparently of the extremist type. The position of Michael himself was probably similar to that of many among his intellectual friends and correspondents. Though firmly attached to the ways of his fore-

[1] Ep. Inn. III., viii. 55. The next letter was addressed to the Archbishops, Bishops, and Prelates of the Empire of Constantinople. But it is unfortunately lost.

[2] So Norden concludes from the reference in the Letters of Acominatus (ed. Lampros, ii., p. 312). It seems rather strange that an event which would have been so important in the life of Acominatus should receive so slight mention.

fathers, and possessed with a feeling of abhorrence for the Latins and all their doings, he felt no contempt or hostility towards those Greeks who bent before the storm, and with whom he kept up, in his exile, a friendly correspondence.

Of the three series of discussions, those held at Constantinople were the most important, and it is almost certainly in these that Theodore's deputy, Mesarites, afterwards took part. All the questions of difference seem to have been brought forward. In the doctrinal question the Cardinal was, as we have seen, not authorized to make any compromise, but he at least allowed the question to be discussed, and tried to convince his opponents out of books which he had brought with him from Rome. In ritual, having failed to obtain any compromise from the Greeks, he declared that the difference was non-essential—the Eucharist was valid whether fermented or unfermented bread were used. In general, the Greeks considered that they had the upper hand in the whole controversy. Nevertheless, a good many agreed to profess obedience. In Eubœa, Mt. Athos, and other places which he visited in his journey, Benedict imposed an oath of allegiance to the Papacy. On the whole, he had probably accomplished a good deal. But political and racial, as well as religious ideas and prejudices were against him.

We have already referred to the intolerant action of several of the Latin clergy, who considered that the Greek ritual involved a profanation of the altars. Then again there was a far more rigid interpretation of the submission demanded than would have satisfied Innocent or Benedict. Not merely ecclesi-

astical obedience, but feudal allegiance, promised by the vassal with his hands in those of his lord, was required by some of the Roman ecclesiastics. This act was by the Greeks considered humiliating.

Again, reconsecration was sometimes demanded. Thus we find that the Bishop of Negroponte (Eubœa), a friend of Michael Acominatus, who had given in his allegiance to Cardinal Benedict, was degraded by Acominatus' successor, because he refused to receive anointing at the new Metropolitan's hands. It is gratifying to learn that Innocent [1] reprimanded Bérard and reinstated the Bishop of Negroponte, though he was obliged to promise canonical obedience to his Archbishop as well as to the Pope. In general, Innocent required [2] that only in the case of bishops not already consecrated, and monks and nuns who had not received benediction, should the Latin rite be insisted on.

The acts of bitterness and faction were not all on one side. We find that there was a serious division in one of the monasteries of Mt. Athos between certain Iberian monks, who had promised obedience to the Cardinal, with the manual ceremony, and the rest of the community. The question was referred to the Bishop of Achrida (a city on the confines of Bulgaria), Demetrius Chomatenus, a man learned in the law,[3] whose policy will concern us later on. Demetrius seems to have been as irreconcilable on the Greek side as Bérard or any

[1] Ep., xi. 179.

[2] *Ibid.*, xi. 155.

[3] Many of his decisions have been collected by Cardinal Pitra and published in his *Analecta Sacra Solesmensi parata* (published in Rome, 1891), which contains much valuable material for the ecclesiastical history of the time.

of his compeers on the Latin. The monks who had submitted were traitors to the religion (ἔθη) of their fathers, and no communion with them was lawful.

Considering the persistent character of Greek monasticism, even in its decline, one would have expected to find that Benedict incurred a sturdy opposition from the monks of Constantinople,[1] and such was the case. Their most prominent spokesmen were the brothers Mesarites, of whom the elder, John, had been in the imperial service, and now, in the seclusion of the cloister, set forth the Greek cause in writing, and came out to take part in the public disputations. As has been noticed above, the monks and clergy generally declined to recognize as patriarch anyone but Camaterus as long as he lived. It would be interesting to know whether any steps were taken from Nicæa to obtain the recognition of Michael Autoreanus. If there were, they were unsuccessful. Yet there was always probably a minority that looked to Nicæa. The successor of Autoreanus, Theodore Eirenicus (1214-15) wrote them a solemn warning against submission to the Pope or to the Latin patriarch of Constantinople, lest they should find themselves involved in heresy.[2] Recalcitrancy was naturally followed by threats and finally ejection. Before long there were very few important bishoprics in the hands of geniune

[1] In the opposition of the Latins the monastic element was strong, but Studium is not prominent. From the fact that Abbé Marin finds nothing to say about this monastery during the period, we may feel sure that there is nothing to be said.

[2] See *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, vol. x., Art. by Papadopulus Kerameus.

Greeks in the lands ruled from Constantinople. A curious trace of their submission is found in various manuscripts of the Roman Mass transliterated into Greek writing, so that the officiating Greek priests might at least read the service with some degree of accuracy, however unintelligible it was to them and their congregations.

But Innocent desired to bring about the union of the Churches by means of conciliation, not by wholesale spoliation of the Greek clergy or by the foisting of alien prelates on an unwilling people. The Emperor Henry, too, as we have already seen, always preferred peaceable and equitable means. Accordingly, in 1213-14, another papal legate was sent to resume the work of Benedict. This legate was Cardinal Pelagius of Albano, a Spaniard by birth. When he arrived in Constantinople the patriarchal See was vacant, as Morosini had died in 1211, and the difficulties in the way of choosing his successor had occasioned a long interregnum.

The authority given to Pelagius [1] was equivalent to that formerly held by Benedict. But he exercised it in a very different way. Unfortunately we have this time only the Greek accounts from which to judge of the course of the negotiations.[2] But

[1] See "Inn. Ep.," xvi. 104, 6. These are letters of recommendation for Pelagius to the Emperor Henry, the bishops, abbots, etc., of Constantinople, and Walter, Prince of Achaia, respectively.

[2] Mainly these: The report of the Bishop of Ephesus, referred to on p. 100; Acropolita, 17, and the letter of the Constantinopolitans to Innocent III., edited by Cotelerius in "Documenta Ecclesiæ Græcæ," vol. iii., p. 495 *seq.*; and given in part in M. P. G., 140. *Cf.* Heisenberg, "Nic. Mes.," p. 4 *seq.*

though these are by no means unprejudiced, we cannot avoid the conclusion that Pelagius acted in a very high-handed way, imprisoning priests and monks who refused to acknowledge the papal supremacy, threatening the disaffected, and closing the churches. Of course there is the possibility that some of the injured parties had already made submission, and were now punished as traitors. In any case, however, their treatment was unwarrantably harsh.

But before matters could come to a crisis, help was brought to the persecuted champions of Greek orthodoxy from two powerful persons, who, however much they were normally in opposition to one another, were now acting in harmony—one might even suspect in co-operation—the Emperor Henry and the Emperor Theodore. Henry received an appeal [1] from the Constantinopolitan Greeks, who besought him to interfere on their behalf, insisting that their submission to the secular authority of the Latin Empire did not carry with it the abandonment of their spiritual independence. Henry had already induced them [2] to make public acclamations in honour of Innocent, at the end of divine service: "Long life to Innocent, Lord Pope of the elder Rome."

This was, however, a somewhat meagre acknowledgment of supremacy, nor was even so much consented to except as a temporary compromise. But Henry was a statesman, and saw, as apparently the Legate could not see, the need for conciliation.

[1] Acropolita, 17.

[2] Letter of the Greeks of Constantinople to Innocent III., *loc. cit.*

On his own authority the Emperor released the recalcitrant clergy and monks and ordered the services in church to be resumed. Furthermore, he permitted those monks who wished it to depart from Constantinople, and settle in places assigned to them within the territories of Theodore Lascaris.

But it seems to have been the arrival of Theodore's own representative, the Bishop of Ephesus, Nicolas Mesarites, also deputy to the previous conference, that finally stayed the persecution.[1] The Bishop had received instructions to do what he could in the cause of general peace as well as for the union of the Churches. To him the legate declared that if Theodore (whom he honoured with the title of Illustrious Emperor) would promise obedience, not only would the monks remain unmolested, but all the Greek clergy might retain their churches. Any such idea, however, had probably never crossed Theodore's mind. Yet, as will be seen hereafter, there were some Greeks in distant parts who suspected him of going further than became him in seeking papal aid for his dynastic ambitions.

But to return to the actual conference in Constantinople, as described by Mesarites afterwards. He was received with hospitable courtesy, though in his modest objection to Roman pomp and ceremony (!) he refused the horse brought for his use, and preferred to enter the city riding on a mule.

[1] Report of Bishop of Ephesus, *apud* Norden, pp. 221 *seq.* At the same time it must be noted that from this and his other works, we know that Mesarites, though a worthy man, was one unlikely to make the least of his own importance.

A similar protest—on both sides—against ecclesiastical arrogance was made next day in Sta Sophia. The Bishop was angry that the Cardinal (whom he regarded as inferior in rank to himself) did not rise from his seat to do honour to his guest. The Cardinal, in reply, stretched out his right foot to show that the slipper was coloured with the imperial purple.[1] Surely it would be derogatory to the dignity of any wearer of the purple to rise to meet any one at all.[2] But the other bishop was equal to the emergency. He pulled off his own shoe, and showed that it was purple inside. He was imperially adorned as his rival, but Christian humility forbade his exhibiting the badges of his distinction. Unfortunately, the Ephesian bishop seems to have enjoyed dwelling on an episode of this kind instead of attending strictly to matters of business. It is greatly to be regretted that he has very little to say afterwards about the projects of church union and political pacification, unless—as does not seem impossible — he kept the most serious parts of his conversation with the Cardinal for Theodore's private ear. On one point he gave way: that the patriarch in Nicæa should drop the title "of Constantinople" and content himself with that "of the Greeks." This concession was, naturally,

[1] The purple—or vermilion—shoes of the Roman legate are also mentioned by Acropolita, *loc. cit.*

[2] English readers will remember Bede's story of Augustine of Canterbury, who, by not rising to meet the Keltic monks, perpetuated the disunion of the Churches. As to the Eastern Bishop's shoes, a parallel is found in the sumptuary laws of an ancient Spanish code: to encourage simplicity, the wearing of silk outside was prohibited; but to encourage the silk trade, that material might be used as a lining.

objected to afterwards by the patriarch, though the Bishop insisted that the title was wide enough for anybody: "for where in the world are there not Greeks? They dwell in Africa, Asia, and Europe." It is scarcely to be supposed that Pelagius would have accepted this interpretation. Thus the Bishop seems hardly to have avoided offence on either side.

Although the Bishop distinguished himself—in his own opinion, at least—by a speech in favour of the use of leavened bread, and more effectually, perhaps, by his championship of the persecuted monks and priests in Constantinople, the most serious part of the conference, as concerned the Nicenes, was yet to come. The Bishop of Ephesus, with a Spanish ecclesiastic, and the Italo-Greek interpreter, returned to Asia, and came to Heraclea Pontica, where Theodore was just then engaged in putting down David Comnenus. A long discussion was held both on the political and on the ecclesiastical questions, Theodore himself being present throughout. No definite decision was arrived at, but the whole conference seems to have been marked by good humour, thanks, in all probability, to a warning given by Theodore to the Bishop against giving unnecessary offence. The agents of Pelagius were finally sent back to Constantinople with presents received from the Emperor, and assurances of his goodwill.

It would be vain to speculate on the details of a conference which led to nothing. Subsequent events might lead us to suppose that Theodore kept in view the matrimonial alliances he was planning with Henry's family, which ought to have tended

to the general peace, and in matters ecclesiastical, the often demanded panacea of an œcumenical council.

This latter demand found utterance in a remarkable document,[1] the authorship of which is unknown. It purports to have been written by the Greeks in Constantinople to Innocent III., and constitutes a long list of grievances in things trivial and weighty, showing—if it had not often been shown before—how radically even the more compromising Greeks differed from members of the Roman Church in their ideas of ecclesiastical authority, and how bitter was the racial feeling between East and West. The writers profess themselves ready to live under the rule of "Sirreris" (Sire Henry, the Emperor) and to give honorary distinction to the "Lord Pope of the Elder Rome," but they disapprove strongly of the variation of the Latins from ancient doctrine (as to the procession of the Holy Ghost) and of the kind of supremacy claimed for the Pope, who is treated, not as St Peter's successor, but as St Peter himself. Moreover, they resent bitterly the disrespect shown by the Latins for all their sacred places and rites, and their offensive conduct and manners generally. The remedy is for Innocent to call a General Council. But before this is done, the Greeks must have their own patriarch, who can speak their own tongue. They do not definitely imply that such a patriarch is already at Nicæa, prepared to take over the jurisdiction of all the Greeks, though

[1] Letter of the Greeks to Innocent III., *loc. cit.* It would be interesting to know how far it was based on the former epistle, which had been drawn up by John Mesarites, and (apparently) never reached its destination.

some historians [1] would read this intention between the lines of the document. It is hardly necessary to say that to Innocent and to the whole Western Church the proposition seemed impracticable. The Council of the Lateran was assembled in 1215, with the ostensible purpose of settling matters, but no clergy of the Greek communion were summoned, nor was any further concession made than a recognition of the validity of sacraments performed according to Greek ritual, coupled with a prohibition of rebaptism of Greek Christians and reconsecration of Greek altars.

It may be that the failure of this appeal from the Greeks of Constantinople strengthened the purely Hellenic party of Nicæa. Theodore had for some time made up his mind that union could only be brought about after a recognition of equality between the contending parties, and it was now clearly seen that such equality could not easily be recognized at Rome. It would seem that Theodore kept the patriarchate vacant for a time after the death of Autoreanus while the mission of Cardinal Pelagius was going on. After the embassy of the Bishop of Ephesus had ended in gifts and courteous professions, he appointed as patriarch a man strongly opposed to any kind of concessions, Theodore Eirenicus Copas. We have already seen that Eirenicus, during his brief patriarchate, which probably only lasted from September 1214 to January 1215,[2] wrote a letter to the Greeks of

[1] Especially Ep. Dr Norden, p. 228. But possibly, at this moment, the Nicæan See was vacant.

[2] For the dates and policy of Eirenicus, see the already cited article by Papadopulos Kerameus in *Byz. Zeitsch.*, x., where

Constantinople, vigorously repudiating the action of any who acknowledged the supremacy of the Pope or of the Latin patriarch. He took the ground that it was impossible in questions of authority to draw the line between discipline and doctrine. To acknowledge fidelity to the Pope was to assent to Roman beliefs. If there were still a chance of having the question of faith settled in a representative council, the patriarch might have been less emphatic.

The Eastern emperors, whether in Constantinople or in Nicæa, acted politically in so close conjunction with their patriarchs, that it seems natural to take the letter of Eirenicus as marking the intention of Theodore to get ecclesiastical matters settled by other than papal initiation. But he had not given up the idea of a council, though he had changed his basis of operations. In 1220,[1] the Patriarch of Nicæa, Manuel Sarantenos, sent round letters of summons to a general council of the East, which should comprise the patriarchs of the ancient oriental sees, and was to send an embassy to Rome to negotiate with the Pope respecting a scheme of reunion. The project does not seem altogether unpractical, and it was certainly worthy of those who acted as the heads of Greek Christendom in Church and in State. Unfortunately it foundered on a rock much like those which in ancient history had ever and anon thwarted the rise of great

the letter of Eirenicus to the Greeks of Constantinople is given in full. *Cf. supra*, p. 104.

[1] Our information about this projected council is chiefly derived from the correspondence published in a very important article in *Byzantina Chronica*, iii., to which we shall have to refer again. Mel., p. 106.

and equitable federations: the old jealousy among Greek states. Theodore of Epirus had now assumed the position of a champion and protector of the Greek Church, and the clergy under his sway, especially the Bishop of Naupactus,[1] whose answer survives, repudiated any action which implied the superiority of either patriarchate or court of Nicæa. The foreign policy of Theodore Lascaris, his marriages—attempted and accomplished—into the Latin Imperial family in Constantinople, possibly his late treaty with Venice, gave an excuse for accusing him of treachery to the cause. The œcumenic Greek Council was never held.

The same Patriarch Manuel, as already stated, thwarted Theodore's project for the marriage of his daughter Eudocia to the Emperor Robert. The objection is said to have been made on the score of consanguinity, but the relation was a somewhat fanciful one, and it might seem natural to suspect that Manuel was influenced by the opinions of his brother clerics living under different jurisdictions, and to have come to share their dislike for even a family alliance between Greeks and Latins. This point is, however, impossible to decide, nor is it of great importance.

On the whole, as said above, the ecclesiastical policy of Theodore Lascaris seems to accord very well with what we have seen of his policy in matters of state. Politically he aimed at the recovery of Constantinople and of the whole Eastern Empire for his people and his dynasty. With this end in view he shrank from no conflict. But at the same

[1] John, Bishop of Naupactus, was a friend and correspondent of Michael Acominatus.

time, he was ready to consent to temporary delimitations of frontier, to solicit the alliance of other powers, to enter into marriage connections with the family of his rival. Similarly he desired to see the whole Greek Church united under the patriarch who, though having Constantinople for his titular see, presided actually over that of Nicæa. But this guiding idea did not prevent him from entering into negotiations with the Pope for securing ecclesiastical unity, nor, apparently, from friendly arrangements with the Emperor Henry on behalf of the Constantinopolitan clergy. Both in Church and State, he made firm his ground in Nicæa, but aimed at indefinite expansion. Neither in ecclesiastical nor in civil politics does he seem to have carried compromise beyond the limits of self-respecting dignity. If neither he nor his successors were absolutely successful in restoring Greek unity in matters spiritual and temporal—though they accomplished much in that direction—the fault was less in the Lascarids themselves than in the ὕβρις and στάσις, which had ever been the bane of the Greek people.

In his internal policy with regard to the Church, Theodore followed the example of those Byzantine emperors who had taken a personal interest in the suppression of heresies. One chronicler [1] tells how certain disputants concerning the character of the eucharistic elements came to Nicæa and carried on controversies, till the Emperor sent them word that if they attacked the old ways and beliefs of the Church he would leave the Italians and the Turks and all his other enemies alone until he had exterminated them. If this anecdote points to

[1] Anonymous, published by Sathas, p. 466.

a certain narrowness of outlook, we must remember the old tradition of the Comneni and the present need of presenting an united front to the foe. We must also set over against it the high laudations Theodore received from the most intellectual of the Greek clergy, especially the circle of Acominatus.

Theodore died in or about August 1222, at the age of forty-eight, after a reign reckoned as eighteen years in duration.[1] He was buried in the monastery of Hyacinthus, by the side of his wife Anna and her father, Alexius III. He had survived his great contemporaries, Innocent III. and the Emperor Henry, about six years. His successor was John Vatatzes Ducas, husband of his daughter Irene, who figures in Byzantine history as John III.[2]

[1] *I.e.*, from his election in Sta Sophia, not from his coronation.

[2] In a coin attributed to John Vatatzes, we have the figure of the Emperor standing side by side with St Constantine. As we have not anything of the kind elsewhere, Mr Wroth ("Coinage of Nicæa," p. lxxii) suggests that the child of Theodore I. and his Armenian wife, called in Armenian (not Greek) sources *Constantine*, may have, for a time, shared the imperial title.

CHAPTER VII

EARLIER DIFFICULTIES AND CONFLICTS OF JOHN VATATZES—PROGRESS AND RIVALRY OF THEODORE OF EPIRUS AND JOHN ASAN OF BULGARIA—DISUNION OF GREEK CHURCHES IN EAST AND WEST

WHEN John III. (Vatatzes) succeeded his father-in-law, Theodore Lascaris, as Emperor ruling from Nicæa (in 1222), it was evident that the times and the situation required a strong man. The Nicene was now one of four great powers that strove for the sovereignty of the East. The Latin Empire had fallen into weaker hands since the death of Henry of Flanders and the defeat of Peter Courtenay, since neither of the children of Peter and Yolande possessed much energy or ability. Yolande had died in 1219. Her son Robert, who now occupied the throne, seems to have been feeble and licentious. Still, the maintenance of "the Empire of Roumania" was important for Western Christendom, and the popes were ready, from time to time, to put forth spiritual promises and warnings on its behalf. Should it fall, however, there were two powers besides Nicæa—one Greek and the other non-Greek—ready to take its place. Theodore Angelus, despot of Epirus, after his great victory over Peter Courtenay, was able to extend his sway in Thessaly and Macedonia, and in the spring of

1223, a few months after the death of Theodore Lascaris, he obtained Thessalonica. The Latin Emperor Robert had sent some forces to create a diversion by besieging Serrhæ, but on hearing that their comrades had at this time been defeated in Asia Minor (as we shall see directly), they retired and left the ground free to Theodore Angelus. Demetrius, son of Boniface, withdrew to Italy and sought in vain for succour.[1] Theodore could now aspire to the reconquest of Constantinople itself, and was quite ready to listen to the request of the Western Greeks, who hailed him as liberator, and begged him to assume the title of Emperor.

The fourth claimant was John Asan II., son of the earlier John Asan, who had superseded the usurper Borilas on the Bulgarian throne in 1218. This John Asan stands high among the Bulgarian kings in his reputation as conqueror and as civilizer. Even the Greek chronicler Acropolita has a good word for him. In Constantinople he was so much respected as to be thought of at one time as a possible regent. He seems likewise to have had an eye to the eventual succession to the Empire.

The reign of John Ducas Vatatzes is occupied by alternate wars and alliances with these several powers—except that with the rival Greek power he is almost always at variance. Happily for him, his rivals were also in constantly changing relations with one another, temporary alliances being followed by weakening conflicts.

John Vatatzes, though a man of great ability, does not seem to have distinguished himself much

[1] He afterwards succeeded to Montferrat.

before his accession to the throne. We do not even know how he held the double surname, but as there are many prominent persons bearing the name *Ducas*, he is better distinguished by his other name of Vatatzes.[1] Before the death of his predecessor he had held the dignified position of *protovestiarios*, and had married the Emperor Theodore's daughter, Irene, widow of one of the Palæologi. This lady possessed the intellectual tastes and the energetic character of her family, and Vatatzes must have found his marriage advantageous from other than the dynastic point of view. There seems to have been no difficulty about his succession, although Theodore had left a young son, who probably died early, as we do not hear of him again.[2] The coronation was solemnly performed by the Patriarch Manuel.

There was, however, some dissatisfaction felt, though it is impossible for us to tell either its grounds or its extent. Two brothers of the late Emperor, Alexius and Isaac Lascaris, who had both held the title *sebastocrator*, set off for Constantinople soon after Theodore's death, carrying with them their niece Eudocia, whom, as already stated, her father had wished to see married to Robert of Constantinople. If their object was to further this plan, it was not attained. Eudocia was not married to Robert, but to a prominent Frenchman, Anseau de Cahieu. Two years after the accession of John Vatatzes[3] we find the brothers, at the head of a

[1] For illustrious persons of this name, see Schlumberger: "Sigillographie Byzantine," p. 712. Among the seals he seems to include one of John himself.

[2] See above, p. 88.

[3] Acropolita, 37 *seq.*

Frankish force, opposed to the Nicene Emperor in Bithynia. They were, however, put to flight in an engagement near to a chapel of the Archangel Michael, in the neighbourhood of Pœmanenum. The leaders were captured and blinded, and Vatatzes used his opportunity, by making himself master of Pœmanenum, Lentiana, and some neighbouring places. He also collected a fleet which he stationed at Holcus, on the Hellespont, and by means of which he secured some places on the northern side of the Hellespont, especially Madyton and Callipolis. He was even able to assert his sway over some of the Ægean Islands.[1] Rhodes was made nominally subject, though under the government of a fairly independent ruler (Gabala).

Vatatzes had to face another conspiracy, which had been stirred up by a cousin of his, Nestongus Andronicus. This man was so formidable that the Emperor thought it best to burn some ships he was preparing at Lampsacus, for fear of their being seized by the Latins, and proceed to crush the insurrection without delay. The conspirators were taken, blinded and maimed. Nestongus was at first allowed some liberty, but having attempted the assassination of the Emperor, he was closely imprisoned. He succeeded, however, in escaping to the Turks, among whom he ended his life.

Meantime the most formidable of the Emperor's rivals, Theodore of Epirus, was gaining in power

[1] Gregoras, ii. 3, says that in a short time he acquired Lesbos, Chios, Samos, Icaros and Cos, with the neighbouring islands—and also Rhodes. The history of the Greek islands is very complicated and shifting. See Hopf (*Documents inédits*), who gives genealogical tables of all the island dynasties. *Cf.* Bury's Gibbon, vol. vi., app. 18,

and in extent of dominions. His greatest success, the capture of Thessalonica, was not unconnected with some of the events just described. And the forces sent by the Latin Emperor of Constantinople into the kingdom of Thessalonica having retreated to Constantinople (as just related), Theodore was able to make himself master of the whole country of Southern Thrace.

It was now that he took a very momentous step, in the assumption of the imperial title and dignity. In so doing he had the enthusiastic support of a large proportion of the Greek clergy, and probably of the whole Greek population of Epirus, Thessaly, and Thessalonica. In spite of his dubious action towards the Papacy, which has been construed by some [1] into a promise of submission to the spiritual jurisdiction of the Pope, Theodore was generally looked up to by his Greek subjects as a deliverer from the Latin heresy and Latin oppression and "barbarism." [1]

It was natural enough that he should be regarded in a very different light by John Vatatzes and all those who supported the Empire established in Nicæa. Acropolita, historian and courtier, after describing his new arrangements and hierarchy of officials, declared that, after all, Theodore ruled in a Bulgarian, or rather Barbarian, fashion. He also says that John would have been willing to allow his rival the second place in dignity, with recognition of his authority wherever it was actually exercised, but Theodore firmly refused. He saw the importance

[1] See interesting proclamation of Synod of Greek clergy held at Arta, published as Appendix V. to Meliarakes, *Ἱστορία τοῦ βασιλείου τῆς Νικαίας*.

of obtaining ecclesiastical[1] sanction for his increased dignity, and required the Archbishop of Thessalonica to crown and anoint him Emperor. But the archbishop, whether by prudence or fear, refused to perform the rite.

This archbishop was Constantine Mesopotamites,[2] who had held civil as well as ecclesiastical office under both emperors of the house of Angelus, and must have learned to accommodate himself to circumstances. There had been a bishop in com-

[1] There is a good deal of information on the ecclesiastical rivalry of Nicæa and Epirus, which is used by Meliarakes in his History, but part of which is not very accessible to the English student. The principal letters bearing on the subject, chiefly those of John of Naupactus, the Patriarch Manuel, and Theodore Angelus Ducas (Megas Comnenus), are published in an article entitled "Epirotica Sæculi, xiii.," Vasilievsky, in "Byzantina Chronica," vol. iii., 1896 (Academy of St Petersburg). It also contains the proclamation of the Synod of Arta, copied by Meliarakes and cited above. The very important letter from George Bardanes, Bishop of Corcyra, to the Patriarch Germanus, forms an appendix to the work by Mustoxides: "Delle cose Corcirese," published in 1848 and not easily obtained. (There is a copy in the British Museum, and the MS. of Bardanes' letter is in the Bodleian Library, Oxford.) The correspondence of Demetrius Chomatenus with the Patriarch Germanus is in his works (cited above) in Pitra's "Spicilegium," 1891. The letters of Michael Acominatus, Bishop of Athens (ed. Lampros, 1880) throw light on the characters and ideas of the leading ecclesiastics among both sections of Greeks.

Chomatenus (see below, p. 130) says that Theodore had support of Church, army and senate. It would be interesting to know exactly what he means by Theodore's senate.

[2] Nicetas calls him *τὸν καθ' ἡμᾶς Πρωτέα καὶ πολυτροπώτατον ἅμα καὶ ποικιλώτατον*. He further tells how his combining the functions of churchman and statesman gave a handle to his enemies and led to his overthrow. It is not clear when or how he recovered his bishopric. In the Letters of Michael Acominatus, no. 71 is addressed to him as *Τῷ ἐπὶ τῆς ἱερᾶς σακέλλης κῦρ Κωνσταντίνῳ τῷ Μεσοποταμίτῃ*.

munion with Rome under the Montferrat dynasty, but he had been sent away and a Greek put in his place. The most probable explanation of Mesopotamites' conduct at this juncture is that he believed in the power and the good fortune of the Nicene dynasty, and felt sure of the storm that would be evoked by the establishment of a new claim to autocracy.

However this may be, Theodore was able to obtain his desire by appealing to another and far more notable man—Demetrius Chomatenus—who held the title of Bishop of the First Justiniana and all Bulgaria.[1] The last part of his title does not imply that he was a subject of the Bulgarian king. The term *Justiniana and all Bulgaria*, in the ecclesiastical nomenclature of this time, does not stand for the whole realm of John Asan, but for that part of Macedonia which had been inhabited by Bulgarians, but had been subjected to Constantinople, and was now ruled by Theodore Angelus.[2] It took in the country to the east of the Albanian Mountains, with the city of Achris.

There was another prominent ecclesiastic who might have seemed more suitable for the discharge of this office, John Apocaucus, Bishop of Naupactus, which was now associated with Theodore's capital, Arta. But he was now aged and infirm, and apparently crippled by gout, and seems, while heartily in sympathy with all that was being done towards strengthening the position of Theodore and

[1] Meliarakes, p. 196.

[2] After a good deal of consideration, I used the surname Angelus of Theodore, as the least indistinctive. It must always be remembered that he was also *Comnenus* and *Ducas*.

asserting the independence of the Church in his dominions, to have wished, if possible, to avoid a distinct breach with Nicæa. He had already had some unpleasant correspondence with the Patriarch Manuel, first about the appointment of certain Greek bishops without the patriarch's sanction, and then, as already related,[1] about the proposed synod to discuss terms of agreement with Rome. Some of the episcopal consecrations objected to by Manuel as uncanonical had been performed during the reign of Michael Angelus, and those who took part in them had thought best to ask leave of the patriarch afterwards—the result of which was a grudging consent to accomplished facts, with a warning that the same should never occur again. Similar acts did, however, recur, in the appointment of two very important bishops—George Bardanes to Corcyra, and Demetrius Chomatenus to Achris, or (as already explained) to "First Justiniana and all Bulgaria." Neither of these men was open to personal objections. Both were learned, patriotic, and of generally high reputation. It is probable that the disputes relating to their appointment were partly effect and partly cause of their opposition to the "œcumenic" claims of the patriarch. We have already seen[2] that Demetrius Chomatenus had taken up an uncompromising attitude towards those monks or clerics who had made submission to Rome. He proved no more accommodating with regard to the authority of Nicæa, and his great influence due to his knowledge of laws and canons made him a formidable opponent.

George Bardanes had passed much of his youth

[1] See above, p. 112.

[2] See p. 103.

in Athens. He was a favourite pupil of the much-respected bishop to whom we have already more than once referred, Michael Acominatus [1] (Choniates). Many letters written to him from Michael in his exile in Ceos are still extant, and show a characteristic anxiety lest George should either lose his zeal for literature or fall into the habit of using the new colloquial expressions and grammatical anomalies that were already intruding into the Greek language. Michael might have been spared his fears. Bardanes won and retained the surname of The Attic, and in his epistles the rhetoric is as flowery and the style as learnedly involved as in the most ornate works of Michael himself. Bardanes seems to have retained the title of *chartophylax* of Athens, after the employment attached to the office had gone, through the conquest of the city by the Franks. When the important bishopric of Corcyra was vacant, Bardanes was the candidate approved by Theodore Angelus, by Bishop John of Naupactus, and by the ex-bishop of Athens, whose word with John and the other leading clergy carried great weight. The action of Theodore on this occasion (while yet only *despotes*, in 1220) is characteristic of his ecclesiastical policy.[2] He summoned a synod at Arta, to fill the vacant See. "And if my desire is not rejected by you, if you will allow co-operation of secular with sacred (authority), I would inform you, but not in an arbitrary way (*συνεισφέρω βουλὴν παρ' ὑμῖν, ἀλλ' οὐ τυραννικήν*), that I consider the person most suitable for the present choice to be the illustrious

[1] See Letter, Michael to George Bardanes, in Appendix.

[2] See Letter 7 in the article "Epirotica" in *Byz. Chron.*, cited above; also Meliarakes, p. 203.

chartophylax of Athens, our esteemed Bardanes." John of Naupactus wrote urgently to Bardanes, exhorting him not to hide his light under a bushel, and the appointment was made, not without causing much irritation at Nicæa. Neither John of Naupactus, however, nor any of the other Western Greeks, wished for a formal breach with the patriarch. John wrote a letter pleading the necessity of filling up deserted bishoprics and the lawfulness of departing from the canons when any important cause is at stake. John and Manuel had been fellow-students together in Constantinople, and John at least was willing to be as friendly as was compatible with the interests of the Greeks of the West. But he had set all his hopes on the success of Theodore Angelus. He rejoiced when Theodore became master of Thessalonica, and expressed a hope that it might lead to the capture of Constantinople. He took an active part in the steps which led to Theodore's coronation and in justifying the act afterwards. He drew up a rather curious and very instructive letter, from the clergy assembled in the West, to the œcumenical patriarch.[1] They recapitulate what they and all the Church have received from the achievements of Theodore, which well entitle him to the title conferred upon him. Here they seem on pretty safe ground, but their position seems rather weaker when they justify the independence of their action by saying that it was *against the will* of their Emperor that bishops should be sent from the East to fill up sees in the West, and they give

[1] Epirotica, no. 26. This was probably sent to Manuel, but received by his successor, Germanus. May not Manuel's death have increased the delay they complained of ?

away their case entirely when they entreat the patriarch to consent to the autonomy of their Church, since if this autonomy is not recognized within three months, they fear that the Emperor Theodore will make submission to the See of Rome.

This last statement puts the conduct of the Greek bishops in a new light. Theodore had been represented as the deliverer and great supporter of their Church, yet now they show ignominious fear lest he should desert it altogether and put them all under Rome. It contrasts strangely with the reproaches they had cast on Theodore Lascaris for wanting to be too friendly with Rome, when he had only asked them to take part in a conference to be held on equal terms. One can hardly believe that Demetrius Chomatenus, with his fanatical hatred of Latin ways, could ever have suggested as possible such a lapse on the part of his hero. But John of Naupactus, though perhaps equally Hellenic in feeling, was more alive to the facts of the case. He can hardly, however, be vindicated from the charge of inconsistency. In one letter he objected to the title *œcumenical patriarch* as a novelty, though the patriarchs of New Rome had long held that designation, and he had no objection to calling the Nicene archbishops patriarchs of New Rome. Yet in the letters of the clergy to the patriarch, their independence is based only on Theodore's wishes. Again, he expressed to Theodore, as we have seen, a wish that he might one day reconquer Constantinople, while in one of his letters to the patriarch he utters a desire that the rulers of East and West may combine in brotherly alliance against

their common foes. In any case, the Greeks of the West were so far successful that if they did not secure the goodwill either of Emperor or of Patriarch in Nicæa, they at least restrained Theodore of Epirus from carrying out his threat of making separate terms with Rome.

The rival claims of the two Greek powers—Nicæa and Thessalonica—continue to be urged by ecclesiastical persons, on ecclesiastical or on political grounds. The autocephalous character of the "Western"[1] Church, as against the œcumenical claims of the patriarch, seems inextricably complicated with the independence of the "Empire" of Thessalonica, as against the claims to superiority on the part of the Nicene. There is, however, a difference. All the Greeks of the West were willing to acknowledge the titular superiority of the patriarch, and to mention his name in the Church prayers. But such titular superiority was not recognized by the newer and European secular power as residing in the elder and Asiatic, though such recognition might have checked much animosity and rivalry.

The ecclesiastical face of the disputes is perhaps partly to be attributed to the fact that the clergy were generally used by the secular rulers in drawing up their instructions, partly to the frequency of ecclesiastical synods and the absence or unimportance of any assemblies or great councils of the laity. Soon after Theodore Angelus had

[1] The terms *eastern* and *western* are, of course, used in this controversy with regard to the Churches of the Lascarid Empire and the Empire of Thessalonica respectively. There is no reference to Rome.

assumed the symbols of imperial dignity, there was held, as we learn from a casual reference in the autobiography of the contemporary scholar Nicephoras Blemmydas,[1] in or near the residence of the Emperor Vatatzes, a synod at which nearly forty metropolitans were present. This assembly sent a letter to Theodore bidding him lay the purple aside, seeing that it was not fitting for men of one race to have two emperors and two patriarchs. It seems highly probable that the senators of the Nicene Empire were likewise present, and either combined with the clergy in the representations made to Theodore, or sent another letter of their own. But on this point we have no means of ascertaining the truth. The lines of argument taken by those who attacked and those who supported Theodore's action have come down to us in the correspondence between the Patriarch Germanus and Demetrius Chomatenus, Bishop of Achris.

Germanus had succeeded Manuel some time not long after the coronation of John Vatatzes. The date of his accession to the patriarchate is uncertain, but he must have had to undertake most of the correspondence relative to the difficulties in Thessalonica. Germanus is praised for his learning by so critical a contemporary as Blemmydas, and his extant works prove him to have been a diligent preacher and an ardent controversialist. He was the son of a fisherman on the Bosporus, and thus without ties to any of the great families.

[1] Blemmydas, Διηγήσις Μερίκη, xv.; *cf.* Mel., p. 169. Blemmydas only mentions the synod as giving him occasion to rebut certain charges that had been made against him. The meeting seems to have been near Ephesus.

He seems to have adopted and followed out the policy of the Emperor John, especially in insisting on the unique character of the imperial dignity, which, of course, implied the œcumenical authority of the patriarch of Constantinople. Unfortunately, Germanus was by no means an urbane letter-writer, and his correspondents, Demetrius Chomatenus and George Bardanes, were men of the world as well as accomplished scholars, so that in the controversy which filled the earlier part of Germanus' patriarchate he does not always seem to make the best of his cause. A sketch of this correspondence is necessary to show the relations, secular as well as ecclesiastical, of the two parties.[1]

On hearing of the elevation of Germanus to the patriarchate, Demetrius wrote him a letter of congratulation, drawn up in terms of studied courtesy. He gives Germanus his full title: "To my most holy lord and spiritual master and father, honoured by God, of Constantinople and New Rome Œcumenical Patriarch." With abundance of compliments, he sets forth the happy state of the Church in his own country, under the protection of a powerful Emperor crowned by God, who had devoted all his strength to driving the wolves from the fold; and expresses his ardent hope that the fortunes of the East will be equally happy, that those who hold imperial power, in East and West respectively (οἱ ἐν ἑκατέρᾳ βασιλεύοντες), may be bound together in a chain of harmony. In his reply, Germanus plunges at once *in medias res*. The Archbishop of all Bulgaria is not to frown because he is not addressed as brother and colleague.

[1] Pitra, *Spicilegium*, etc., 1891.

The fault lies not with the patriarch but with the remarkable obtuseness of Demetrius himself. All the clergy in the West need to be convicted of lawlessness. As to Demetrius, whence had he obtained the right to give crowns? What archbishops of Bulgaria had ever crowned emperors? When had any chief-shepherd of Achrida ever "stretched out a patriarchal right hand and consecrated an imperial head?" This anointing was not with the oil of gladness. This chrism had made a breach in the unity of the Roman patriarchate (ῥωμαϊκῆς πατριαρχίας). It was an insult not to man but to Him who had planted Paradise in the East, and had placed a fiery guard to exclude Saracens and other unbelievers. This remark is in allusion to Theodore's dealings with the Saracens in his early days. Of Theodore himself, however, the patriarch speaks respectfully, hoping that he will live up to his name (or prove a real gift of God). The censure is purely ecclesiastical, directed against an unauthorized act of Demetrius. Really, however, it led to deeper issues, and this was recognized by Chomatenus in his reply.

Demetrius began by expressing regret at the tone of the patriarch's letter. He does not feel bound to answer the charges made, since he acknowledges no bond but those of piety and orthodoxy—*i.e.* none of practical superiority and inferiority. But he does not wish to appear unable to defend himself, and he sees that Germanus' letter has really emanated from the Emperor. "The voice of the letter was the voice of the supreme political authority, though the hand that wrote it was the hand of Your Holiness." The combination of religious and secular

considerations had, in the unusual circumstances of the time, become inevitable. Senate, clergy, and army in the West demanded the establishment of power and dignity in the person of Theodore Angelus; and this could only happen by means of an imperial coronation. As to the Eastern Power—it had enough to do in supporting itself. For any irregularity of proceedings, the *tu quoque* argument might be used. Surely there had been some irregularity in the proclamation of Theodore Lascaris in Nicæa, instead of Constantinople, and in the union of the patriarchate of Constantinople with the Metropolitan bishopric of Nicæa. At that time, too, there was no general agreement of senate and clergy, since the Greeks were all scattered to East and West. Circumstances must often dictate action.[1] And those who have established emperors in the East and West respectively have alike been guided by circumstances, and ought not to reproach one another. Chomatenus goes on to recapitulate the excellences of Theodore as champion of the nation and the Church (giving no hint of possible leanings on his part towards Rome), and as descendant of illustrious emperors, especially the great Alexius I. Here he may have touched a tender point of John Vatatzes, who, though a Ducas (by what links we do not know), was not a Comnenus, and owed his imperial connection to his wife. He next defends the dignity of his bishopric, which had received privileges from Justinian, and the occupants of which were fully competent to perform a coronation. Changing his ground, he accuses Germanus

[1] He quotes the proverb: *οἱ καιροὶ εἰσιν αἱ ψυχαὶ τῶν πραγμάτων.*

of going beyond his rights in consecrating Sabbas [1] archbishop of Servia, whereas Servia ought to have been under the ecclesiastical sway of Achrida.

Not long after, Chomatenus wrote another letter to Germanus on the same subjects, the occasion being the appointment by the patriarch of a bishop to a see in Macedonia. He presses the claims of the West to make appointments in lands which the Western Emperor had saved, and pleads again the necessity of considering occasions and circumstances. The reader feels that the compelling occasions are summed up in the person of Theodore Ducas Angelus.

A third champion of the Western Greek Church was simultaneously or soon after obliged to engage in acrimonious discussion with the Patriarch Germanus—George Bardanes, Bishop of Corcyra—whose earlier history has already been touched on.[2] Germanus had appointed bishops to sees within the dominions of Theodore, especially one to Dyrrhachium, but Theodore and the bishops assembled in a synod refused to receive them. Germanus wrote them a letter which must have gone further in its charges than those which he had written to Chomatenus, since it made personal complaints against Theodore of having broken his promises to Theodore Lascaris, of having had dealings with the Saracens, and of having chased away the Bishop of Thessalonica for refusing to crown him. The answer to this letter was drawn

[1] Sabbas was a younger son of King Stephen of Servia, and was venerated as an apostle among the Servians. For an account of his life, and of the severity with which he was treated by Chomatenus, see Meliarakes, App. 3.

[2] See above, p. 124.

up by George Bardanes. It is prolix and extremely ornate in style,[1] but contains points of historic interest—or, rather, the statements made would be important if they could be weighed against other accounts. According to him, Theodore Ducas Angelus had performed great services to Theodore Lascaris in the days when Lascaris was struggling for existence. Any obligations which he had incurred had been abundantly repaid. While Theodore Angelus was in Asia, Bardanes says expressly, Lascaris had not yet assumed imperial dignity.[2] Theodore had not expelled the Bishop of Thessalonica (Mesopotamites), who had wandered off of his own free will. As to Dyrrhachium, if one considers the pains with which it had been won, and the importance of its position, looking towards Italy and Sicily, one need not be surprised that Theodore should wish to see it occupied by one of his own people. Nay, the bishops had interceded for the patriarch's nominee, but the Emperor had shown himself quite firm. Therefore they had better all bow to present necessities, and "every man be contented with his own Sparta."

The breach had been made, and friendly co-operation between the rival States and Churches was, for the time, impossible. The empires were alike Greek, and bound to hostility to the Latins until they should be chased out of all Greek lands. The Churches agreed exactly on all points of doctrine, ritual, and discipline. If there had been a cordial

[1] It is so similar in parts to that of Chomatenus that one must suppose the writer to have seen that document.

[2] See above, p. 91. Perhaps it is not impossible to reconcile Acropolita and Bardanes. Theodore Lascaris may have had expectations at that time above his actual rank.

union among them, the Greek Empire would certainly have been greatly strengthened, and in all probability the fortunes of the Greeks in Eastern lands would for centuries have been more prosperous.

The one person who hindered such a consummation was Theodore Ducas Angelus. It seems not impossible that if he had been willing, some *modus vivendi* might have been found between him and John Vatatzes. In later days Theodore may have repented his refusal of John's overtures. But for a short time, the way to Constantinople seemed open to him, and he feared to lose what seemed to be a golden opportunity.

With regard to the clergy, it is evident that they were animated by zeal for their church, but on both sides we see the effects of that subserviency to the civil power which the Byzantine system had nourished. The West was at least as much under the influence of Theodore Angelus as the East was under the Lascarids. True, there seems to be more Hellenic feeling, more urbanity, and more sense of the present dangers in the Western bishops than in the Eastern. But, on the other hand, Germanus had a cause, though he could not fight like a gentleman, as his opponents did with great skill :—his idea of one Empire and one Œcumenical Patriarchate was worthy of a wiser exponent. And in respect of ambition and worldliness, he was certainly not behind the ablest of his antagonists—Demetrius Chomatenus. The total absence of moderation, not to say of Christian charity, which marks the dealings of Chomatenus towards the Romanizing monks in Mount Athos, and his persecution of the saintly bishop of Servia, prevent us from allowing

full credit to his more dignified though equally unaccommodating opposition to Germanus.

The whole controversy may seem hardly worth the attention we have bestowed upon it, but it gave an opportunity of uttering their opinions to the men of the day most distinguished by their learning and their influence in the Greek world. The views we take of it will depend upon our decision whether or no the Empire of Thessalonica should rank along with that of Nicæa.[1] That the two empires did not and could not combine can hardly fail to be a matter of regret to the student of the period.

[1] This seems to have been the view of Meliarakes, who sets forth the ability and moderation of John of Naupactus, Demetrius Chomatenus, and George Bardanes, in contrast with the rude and overbearing letters of the patriarchs. But he seems to overlook the complete stultification of the Western Greeks in the presence of Theodore Angelus, and their abject flattery even when they suspected him of inclination to Rome. The Lascarids may have domineered over their bishops, but they seem at least to have been faithful to their church.

CHAPTER VIII

WARS AND ALLIANCES OF JOHN VATATZES, 1225-1242

IF we consider the difficult position in which John Vatatzes was placed during the early years of his reign, with three powerful rivals for sovereignty over the Greeks of the East, we may regard it as a piece of good fortune for him that he never had to contend against any strong combination of these rivals or of any two of them. All the alliances among the ruling powers, including those made by Vatatzes himself, were short-lived. But partly by good fortune, partly by diplomatic skill, he was able to profit both by his temporary agreements with his neighbours and by their own dissensions.

Some time in the course of the year 1225, tidings came to John Vatatzes that the people of Adrianople would be glad of his assistance to throw off the Latin yoke. He was probably very glad to have an opportunity of securing a footing in Macedon, with a city of considerable importance. He accordingly despatched forces thither, under two generals of high standing—Ises and Camytses.[1] Their success was rapid and easy. But very soon after they were established in the city, it was again besieged, this time

[1] Acrop., 24. Meliarakes rejects his statement that the troops marched through Macedonian territory.

by Theodore Angelus, who had been extending his conquests far and wide in Macedonian territory, the only other potentate—one Slavus—who held the region of Rhodope Achridos [1] and Melenicus, being connected with him by marriage, and a temporary ally of every rival power in turn. By some means or other, Theodore gained the ear of the citizens, and assured them that if they would expel the garrison with its leaders, and submit to him, they should be honoured and rewarded above all other "Romans." Ises and Camytses accordingly went out with their troops, their safety being guaranteed. Camytses afterwards received great honours from John Vatatzes on account of his loyal and courageous conduct in refusing to do any obeisance to Theodore, or to acknowledge his imperial title. The temporary possession of Adrianople by Vatatzes may have induced the Court of Constantinople to come to terms with that of Nicæa. A treaty was signed in the same year, by which Robert ceded Pegæ and a good deal of Bithynia to John Vatatzes, retaining for the Latin Empire Nicomedia, with the Asiatic coast just opposite Constantinople.

Theodore meantime ravaged the country round Adrianople. There was the less chance of his career being hindered by any efforts on the part of Robert, after a serious quarrel had broken out between the latter and some of his barons. Robert had taken for his mistress the daughter of a companion-in-arms of his uncle, the first Baldwin; and her mother had also been received into his apartments. A Burgundian knight, to whom the younger lady

[1] Near Mt. Rhodope, not to be confounded with the city Achris or *Achrida*.

had been betrothed, avenged his disappointment by penetrating with a few followers into the palace, seizing the mother and throwing her into the Bosporus, and slitting the lips and nostrils of the daughter.[1] Robert was unable to punish the outrage —probably all public opinion was against him. He left the capital and sailed for Italy.[2] Pope Gregory IX. had lately succeeded Honorius IV. He was an elderly man, but full of crusading vigour, and a strong champion of the Latin cause in the East. How far the rights and wrongs of Robert were actually known in the West is uncertain. He seems to have attributed his exile to the unruly conduct of his Greek subjects. He was advised, however, to return, but died in Greece on his homeward journey.

The next lineal heir to the throne of Constantinople was his brother Baldwin, the youngest son of Peter Courtenay and Yolande of Flanders. As Baldwin was only ten years old, a strong regent was evidently necessary. One candidate suggested for the office was King Asan of Bulgaria, already connected with the Courtenay family, since both had marriage connections with the royal family of Hungary. He offered to give his young daughter in marriage to Baldwin, and to conquer all the dominions of Theodore Angelus in Thrace, for reunion to the Empire of Constantinople.[3] If

[1] Marino Sanuto (*apud* Muratori), "Liber secretorum fidelium." Marginal note to 2 iv. 18—though San. calls Robert *Henry*.

[2] Matthew Paris, under year 1237. His knowledge of Greek affairs is not very clear.

[3] For an interesting account of Asan, see Jireček: "Geschichte der Bulgaren," with authorities there cited. But Jireček follows a blunder (made only in one place) of Acropolita, in saying that Robert was brother to Peter of Courtenay. For Asan's

this offer had been accepted, and the conditions accomplished, matters might have gone hard with the Nicene Emperor, as all his three rivals would have been amalgamated in one person. Happily for him, the Frankish nobles in Constantinople looked askance at Asan, who, if no more of a barbarian than they were, was certainly not a very faithful member of the Roman Church. The man chosen was more distinguished, though, owing to his great age, less efficient—John of Brienne, titular king of Jerusalem. John had been an eminent warrior in his time, but he was now upwards of eighty years old. He had borne the chief part in the taking of Damietta by the Crusaders in 1218, a conquest which in the end proved futile—in common with others of his exploits. He had acquired the title *King of Jerusalem* through his marriage with the heiress, Mary of Montferrat, but had not been able to obtain possession, in Palestine, of much more than the cities of Tyre and Acre. He had left the East to solicit aid in France, and had even visited England for the same purpose. His claims, however, had practically passed to the Emperor Frederick II., to whom he had given his daughter Isabel in marriage (1222). The relations between father-in-law and son-in-law were anything but cordial, and the call of John of Brienne to the throne of Constantinople gave additional stimulus to the desire on the part of Frederick for friendly relations with the Greeks, which, as will appear later, animated him in the latter part of his long struggle with the Papacy.

offers to the barons of Roumania see Dandolo (*apud* Muratori, xii.), who calls him Imperator Exagorarum.

So distinguished a person as John of Brienne was not likely to accept the post merely of temporary regent to a minor. The powers and dignities to be conferred on him were arranged in the spring of 1229, at Perugia, where the "barons" of Constantinople and Pope Gregory IX. arranged the terms of the treaty.[1] John was to be joint-Emperor with Baldwin, who was to marry his daughter, and who at the age of twenty should be invested with the "regnum" of Nicæa. The heirs of John were to have, on Baldwin's attaining his majority, such territories as they might conquer beyond certain limits in Europe and Asia. It is noticeable that in the specification of countries and rulers, both the Greek powers—in Nicæa and Thessalonica—are ignored, though Asan of Bulgaria and the titular Italian king of Thessalonica are recognized. John did not, however, enter Constantinople for two years. During the interregnum, the regency at Constantinople was held by another Frenchman, Narjot de Touci. When Brienne was crowned, in September 1231, there were again two worthy representatives of the rival empires in Constantinople and Nicæa, both bearing the same name—John. But before that time events had occurred in more northerly regions which greatly relieved John Vatatzes, in permanently weakening—if not annihilating—the antagonistic Greek power in Epirus and Thessalonica.

It has been seen that after the capture of Adrianople, Theodore Angelus (or Comnenus, as he is commonly called by Western writers[2]) was in a

[1] It is published in Tafel and Thomas, no. 273.

[2] Or, one might say, by some travesty of the name.

very strong position. In 1229 we find him sending an embassy to Frederick II.,[1] in Italy, which was graciously received. The same year he was in possession of Corcyra.[2] His problem was to decide with which of his powerful neighbours to ally himself. As we have seen, he had declined very favourable overtures from Nicæa. For a time he leaned to Bulgaria, and having signed a treaty, he obtained for his brother Manuel the hand of an illegitimate daughter of Asan. But knowing that the relations between Asan and Constantinople were highly strained, Theodore seems to have held out promises to the "Italians" as well as to the "Romans" in his dominions, and gathering forces, he prepared an expedition to the north of the Hebrus.[3] Near to that river he met the host of Asan and his Bulgarians, with whom were serving certain "Scyths,"[4]—probably a band of Coumans, who had retired before the Tartar inroads. The battle was fought at a place called Clocotinitza, and the Bulgarians, who used the parchment of the broken treaty as a standard, were entirely successful. Theodore fell into the hands of Asan, who seems, at first, to have treated him with humanity, but shortly afterwards, on suspicion of Theodore's plotting against his life, caused him to be blinded. He was kept in prison, and his brother Manuel succeeded to Thessalonica, much shorn of its recent possessions, since many great towns like Adrianople, Serrhæ, and Didymoteichus

[1] Riccardus Sangermanus, under 1229, *apud* Muratori, vii.
[2] Ref. in "Muralt. Chron.," p. 341.
[3] Acrop., 25 *et seq.*
[4] See below, p. 148.

had submitted to the conqueror. Manuel only ventured to take the title of *Despotes*, though he retained the imperial practice of writing in red ink. His ambiguous position was derided by an ambassador, whom John Vatatzes had sent—either to strengthen his cause or to see how the land lay. The jest, which was thought a good one, was to compare Manuel to the Messiah, as described in Psalm x., as being at once βασιλεύς and δεσπότης. In fact, he was hardly able to maintain the lesser dignity. He might have hoped for limited support from Asan, his father-in-law, but a curious combination of circumstances checked any such expectations. Asan, who lost his Hungarian wife in 1237, married a very attractive daughter of Theodore, and she induced him to liberate and comfort her father. But for a few years, Manuel endeavoured to maintain himself by seeking powerful helpers. He is said [1] to have gone at once to Geoffrey Villehardouin, Prince of Achaia, and to have become his vassal and claimed his protection, but neither party seems to have taken the relation seriously. Manuel also applied to Pope Gregory IX., and would seem, from Gregory's answer,[2] to have promised not only spiritual obedience, but political subjection. But here again he seems to have been but half sincere, if we judge from an important correspondence in which he was not long afterwards engaged with the Nicene patriarch, Germanus.[3] In this corre-

[1] By Albericus Tresfontanensis, p. 558.

[2] Auray, "Régistres de Greg. IX.," vol. i., p. 493, date April 1232.

[3] *Acta et Diplomata* of Miklosich and Müller, xiii.; full abstract in Meliarakes, p. 291 *et seq.*

spondence the same difficulties appear as in the former letters between the Nicene patriarchs and the bishops within the lands belonging to Epirus or Thessalonica, but Manuel, being brought low, is more ready than this brother had been to magnify the dignity and authority of the patriarch. The pirates are urged by him as an excuse for not sending bishops to Nicæa for consecration, and Germanus remarks on the perennial character of that excuse. Not much seems to have come of the negotiation, unless it helped to strengthen the goodwill—which appeared soon after—between John Vatatzes and Manuel Comnenus.

It may be as well, before we drop the subject of Thessalonica, to continue our anticipation of events, and indicate some of the changes which occurred in the course of the next few years, and paved the way for more decisive action on the part of John Vatatzes later on. In 1237,[1] the blinded Theodore, with some forces supplied by Asan, now his father-in-law, succeeded in recovering Thessalonica. He accomplished this by means of a stratagem which shows great boldness on the part of a man with his disabilities. He put on ragged clothing and crept unsuspected into the city, where he raised a party among his former friends. Manuel retreated, and sailed away to Attalia, where, we are told, he received hospitality from the Saracens—though the port itself seems to have been held by Venetians. Thence he made his way to John Vatatzes, who apparently recognized an opportunity of securing a client prince in Thessalonica. The situation was

[1] See Acropolita, 38. Finlay is wrong in giving Manuel only two years of reign. See Muralt: *Chron.*

in some respects similar to that in which Theodore Angelus had been despatched from Nicæa, except that on this latter occasion military assistance was sent from Asia. Manuel landed at Demetrias and established his rule over Epirus—now called by the Greeks *Blachia*. Before long, however, his wily brother Theodore, in spite of the injuries he had inflicted on him, prevailed on him to join in a family compact. Theodore had handed over the despotat to his son John, considering his own blindness a disqualification for the dignity, though he showed no dimunition of military or diplomatic activity. Theodore (apparently acting for John Angelus) and another brother, Constantine, the position of whose territories is unknown, entered into an alliance with one another and with the Latin princes of the Peloponnese and Euripus (as Eubœa is now commonly called), with a demarcation of their several dominions. The lines of this division are not precisely known. Manuel cannot have held much, as within the last few years a new claimant, of the house of Angelus, had been making extensive conquests in the region of the original despotat of Epirus.

This claimant was Michael II. (the Bastard), son of Michael the first Despot, who had been withdrawn from the country during the first reign of Theodore, and then returned to claim his doubtful heritage. He married a lady of distinguished Greek family, and ruled with her at Arta. This lady, Theodora Petraliphas, was afterwards canonized, and we have her biography written by a late hagiographer.[1] It embodies a pleasing tradition

[1] Job, in Migne, *Patr. Gr.*, vol. 127.

of a pious wife patiently overcoming the fierce and sensual propensities of a capable and immoral husband, but the light it throws on historical facts is not very clear.[1] We have no indication here, or in the account by Acropolita, whether Michael formed one of the contracting parties in the Angeli alliance.[2] In 1241, on the death of Manuel (who repented his perjury, Acropolita says, to John Vatatzes) Michael Nothus succeeded to his power in Thessaly. Thessalonica and Epirus (with Thessaly) are now separate, though not—for a time—mutually hostile. The reason for the compact and the defection of Manuel from his benefactor John Vatatzes to alliance with his treacherous brother may possibly be connected with a temporary breach (in 1237) between Asan and John Vatatzes, to whose doings we must now return.

One of the most serious difficulties of John Vatatzes during the earlier part of his reign was caused by a revolt in Rhodes. This very important island had remained, as already stated,[3] in the hands of a powerful noble who owned some kind of superiority in the Emperor at Nicæa. This Gabbala called himself, and was called by Greeks and Venetians, *Cæsar*. It seems that Vatatzes wanted to make his supremacy more actual, and Gabbala resisted. Acropolita says that he revolted.[4]

[1] Michael made a treaty with the Ragusans in 1237. Manuel had made a very similar one with them in 1232.

[2] Meliarakes thinks that Acropolita means Michael when he writes Constantine. Hopf ("Griechenland," *apud* Erz and Gruber) likewise identifies Michael and Constantine.

[3] See page 119.

[4] Acrop., 28. His account of the whole affair is very slight and partial.

Vatatzes accordingly equipped a fleet against him, which was entrusted to a noble in high position, Andronicus Palæologus. This expedition was proclaimed a success, but the fact remains that soon afterwards Cæsar Gabbala submitted to Venice, obtaining commercial privileges for Rhodes, and promising in return assistance to the Venetians against the disaffected Greeks in Crete [1]—also that Gabbala died in office and handed on his dignity to his brother.[2] Of the whole event we have a vivid account from—not a disinterested party, but one certainly not prejudiced against the Nicene Empire—the scholar Blemmydas. He, it happened, was wintering in Rhodes at the time, being detained, in a book-hunting journey, by the kind hospitality of Gabbala, who had given him a quiet place for study in a Rhodian monastery. To Blemmydas, naturally, Gabbala appeared as an independent governor, deriving authority from ancestral rights, and the Emperor's attack seemed violent and unjustifiable. He says that the imperial forces failed to take the capital and contented themselves with ravaging the country, so that Blemmydas was himself obliged to retreat speedily from his pleasant abode. The story, told with a certain personal animus, gives an idea of the difficulties in the way of a learned and scholarly life, even on the part of one who enjoys the favour of an Emperor and a Cæsar, both patrons of literature.[3]

John Vatatzes had refrained from sailing against Rhodes in person on account of the necessity of

[1] Tafel and Thomas, ii., no. 289.
[2] This we have from Acropolita himself, 48.
[3] Blemmydas, *Diegesis*, Pt. II., x., xi., xii.

meeting an attack on his own dominions from Constantinople. John of Brienne had not been in a hurry to begin a campaign for the recovery of the Asiatic territory which he considered as his lawful possession, but the Rhodian complications gave him an opportunity. He sailed down the Sea of Marmora to Olcus,[1] near Lampsacus, where he landed. It seems strange that he did not meet any opposition. The newly-acquired territory must have been but slightly defended. He did not, however, make much way. For four months he maintained himself about Cenchria (on the Scamander) and in the neighbourhood. When the Emperor John Vatatzes arrived, the Latins were forced to keep to the low ground by the sea, and, as the Greek chronicler naïvely remarks, they would have been forced to return with shame if they had not, by guile, obtained the city of Pegæ. Pegæ was, of course, an important acquisition to Brienne, and the Greeks were a good deal disheartened at the loss of it. Before long, however, it was recovered, and the Latin army forced to retire. But circumstances had shown that the Nicene Empire was by no means secure, even on the Asiatic side. The rivalry with Venice, already mentioned in connection with Rhodes, led to fresh efforts on the part of that republic, so that it entered into close alliance with Brienne, and put down successfully some insurrectionary movements in Crete, which had probably received encouragement from Nicæa. The Pope was using all his influence on behalf of the Latin Empire. And from the far East and North a devastating horde of Tartars were pouring into

[1] Ac., 31 *seq.*

Western Asia and Europe, sending before them scarcely less civilized hosts of Turks or Scyths, particularly the occasional companions of the Tartars, the Shipshak Turks or Coumans [1] whom we have already seen combined with the Bulgarians under Joannitza. This time they were threatening the Bulgarian power, and ready to ally themselves with the Latins.

Under these circumstances, John Vatatzes did wisely in securing an intimate alliance with Asan of Bulgaria. Asan was probably the more disposed to this step because of the rebuff which he had received from the nobles of "Romania." He was at the height of his power, having, as has been related, defeated and captured Theodore Angelus, and permanently crushed the "Empire" of Thessalonica.[2] His foes and those of the Nicene power were the same, although it might seem probable that they would one day become rivals for Constantinople.

The treaty took the form of an active alliance against the Latin Empire of Constantinople, the conquests to be divided between the contracting parties. It was to be cemented by the marriage of the only son of Vatatzes, Theodore, now eleven years old, with Helen, daughter of Asan, aged nine—probably the same child who had been offered as bride to Baldwin. With the family and military alliance there went an ecclesiastical concession on the part of John Vatatzes and the Patriarch Germanus: the bishopric of Tirnovo was acknowledged as independent and as possess-

[1] See Cahun, "Introduction à l'histoire de l'Asie."
[2] Ac., 36.

ing patriarchal dignity. This step might seem inconsistent with the principles of Germanus as we have seen them set forth in his correspondence with John of Naupactus and Demetrius Chomatenus. But it appears on the one hand that the concession was not very seriously meant, and on the other that the heightened dignity of the see of Tirnovo might diminish the prestige of the Church of Epirus or Thessalonica. Certainly we have a patriarchal letter written from Constantinople in 1355,[1] in which it is stated that the honour was only complimentary (*συγκαταβάσεως λόγῳ*) and not intended to place Tirnovo on a level with the great and ancient patriarchates. In a synodical decree Germanus declared that Tirnovo had only received the status of a metropolitan See under Constantinople (*i.e.* for the time being, under Nicæa). That the bishops of Tirnovo might view things differently was only in analogy with the history of the great sees generally.

The two sovereigns—Asan and John Vatatzes—met at Callipolis, on the European side of the Hellespont, and arranged terms. Then Asan's wife, Mary of Hungary—not Asan himself—with the little princess, crossed with Vatatzes to Lampsacus, where the Empress Irene with Theodore awaited them. The marriage ceremony was performed by the Patriarch Germanus. Irene then returned home with the two children, who were to be educated together under her eye, the Bulgarian queen withdrew to her own country, and John Vatatzes rejoined Asan to set about their military expedition. They

[1] Not 1335, as appears in a misprint in Meliarakes, p. 319. Miklosich, *Acta et Dipl.*

had soon overrun the Thracian Chersonese and some country to the north, and captured the principal places. The cities to the south were regarded as belonging to Vatatzes, those to the north were claimed by Asan. They even pressed on to Constantinople, and—according to the Greek account—struck terror into the Latins, John of Brienne watching them from the walls, but not being able to accomplish anything against them. But as autumn was now advanced, they judged it best to retire to their respective countries. The Venetian story, however, which seems the more probable one,[1] is that the retreat was necessitated by the timely arrival of a Venetian fleet, with assistance from Genoa and Pisa, while a French chronicler [2] gives the credit to John of Brienne with his faithful knights and their squires.

Next spring a renewed attack was made by Emperor and King together on the city of Constantinople, and they were again repelled, the Latins having the same allies that had helped the previous year, and in addition Geoffrey of Villehardouin, Prince of Achaia.[3] But the defeat was not decisive enough to render necessary any fresh efforts on behalf of the Latin Empire. Baldwin left Constantinople to seek help in Italy, France, and even England, where we find him in London in April 1238.[4] The English had considered themselves badly treated by John of Brienne, and were not at first inclined to be friendly, but matters were

[1] Saunto, *apud* Muratori, xxii.
[2] Philippe de Mousques.
[3] This, again, is not related by the Greek writers.
[4] Matthew Paris, under that date.

smoothed over and he was kindly received and dismissed with presents. All readers of English history will remember how the tendency of Henry III. to implicate himself in foreign politics, and the lavish expenditure involved in such proceedings, was at this time breeding the discontent which in course of time came to a head in the Barons' War and the constitutional experiments of Simon de Montfort. Gregory IX. had always been eager for the Latin cause in the East, but Baldwin's personal appeal, together with the failure of the ecclesiastical conference,[1] now made him more vigorous than ever in his efforts. He exhorted Bela, King of Hungary, to undertake a crusade on behalf of Constantinople, wrote to warn Asan, and tried a last negotiation with John Vatatzes.[2] The death of John of Brienne, in March 1237, at the age of eighty-nine years, did not make much difference in the situation. During the absence of Baldwin, the government of Constantinople was entrusted by the barons to Anseau de Cahieu, husband of Eudocia, the much-contested daughter of Theodore Lascaris—therefore brother-in-law to John Vatatzes.

One great advantage to the Latin side was the temporary defection of Asan from his alliance with Vatatzes. The reason of the breach is not given us. Possibly the death of Brienne may have opened out new hopes for his ambition in the direction of Constantinople. In any case, he sent for his

[1] See below, p. 165.

[2] Meliarakes, p. 126 *seq.*, gives the greater part of a letter from Vatatzes, supposed to be in answer to Gregory. Its genuineness is denied by Heisenberg in *Byz. Zeit.*, ix. p. 248, owing to the difference of its style from that of most imperial letters.

little daughter back, and negotiated with the Pope and the Franks. Vatatzes and the Empress Irene judged it expedient to let the child go nominally on a visit, with a strong protest against the iniquity of detaining her. When she arrived within her father's territories, she was carried off by him to distant Tirnovo. Acropolita, who was on intimate terms with the imperial family, tells how Helen wept as they rode along, and cried out for her little husband, Theodore, and his kind mother Irene, and how her father thereupon took her on his own horse and slapped her face, bidding her take quietly whatever he had decided for her.

The breach between Asan and Vatatzes and the alliance of Asan with the Latin Empire was followed by an expedition of Latins and Bulgarians, with allies, including some Coumans, into the country recently acquired by the Nicene Emperor to the north of the sea of Marmora. The invading host laid siege to the city of Tzurulus, which was bravely defended by a *megas domesticus* of Vatatzes, Nicephorus Tarchaniotes.[1] The city would, however, have fallen, but for the defection of Asan. He received news of the sudden death of his wife, Mary of Hungary, and his young son ; also of the Bishop of Tirnovo, now recognized as patriarch of his autonomous church. Asan is said to have regarded these events as a divine retribution on his faithlessness to Vatatzes and his son. He withdrew to his capital, and his allies were obliged to raise the siege of Tzurulus. Shortly afterwards, he made due apologies to Vatatzes and sent Helen back to the Nicene court. The religious motive

[1] Acr., 36.

is perhaps enough, in the case of a man like Asan, to account for his sudden change of policy. If we looked for ulterior purposes, we might suggest his new matrimonial projects and fresh schemes as to Thessalonica, which have, by anticipation, already been mentioned in connection with the fortunes of the Despotat.

The Latin Empire did not speedily recover from the blow of the Bulgarian desertion. It was wanting both in men and money. Some funds were raised by the sale of the Holy Crown of Thorns, which St Louis of France was glad to purchase at a high price.[1] The return of Baldwin did not make matters much better. Some forces coming from the West to the aid of Constantinople were stopped by the agency of Frederick II., whose relations with Eastern affairs will concern us in the next chapter.

The result of the succours brought by Baldwin was a fresh attempt to take Tzurulus, which was this time successful. The principal defenders of the place were captured and taken to Constantinople. The Emperor John attempted to recover lost ground by a naval expedition, starting from Nicomedia,[2] but though he succeeded in taking Dacibyza—near Cibotus—and the neighbouring fortress of Nicetiatus, his fleet of thirty triremes, being entrusted to a new commander, was badly beaten by an Italian squadron of triremes. It is interesting to find that Baldwin described

[1] The details are given in Riant's *Exuviæ Sacræ*.

[2] This place had evidently been under Latin rule, but seems to have been obtained for Vatatzes. It certainly had a Greek bishop for some time.

his successful home-coming and the capture of Tzurulus to Henry III. of England.[1] The war, however, was not very vigorously prosecuted. Baldwin seems not to have had enough funds to keep a large army and fleet together. In 1241, John Asan of Bulgaria died, and was succeeded by a young son, an event which gave John Vatatzes an opening for acquiring influence in Thrace and Macedon. Shortly before this[2] he had lost his wife, Irene Lascaris. This lady, as already stated, had intellectual tastes and a strong and amiable character. Acropolita[3] tells us a pleasing story of her shortly before her death. He had been sent by his dying father to Nicæa about four years before, at the age of sixteen, and had been kindly received by the Emperor, and put to study with some other boys under a certain Theodore the Six-winged, who was excellent in rhetoric though not of very philosophic mind. Afterwards he had what he regarded as a high privilege and honour—instruction in philosophy from the great Blemmydas. His expenses were partly defrayed by the Emperor himself, who urged him to do credit to the imperial household, saying that the two most eminent of men were the Emperor and the Philosopher. Young Acropolita was from time to time invited to the palace, where Emperor and Empress were alike

[1] Matthew Paris, under year 1240. He does not mention Tzurulus by name, but calls it a large city near Constantinople.

[2] The event is dated by the eclipse. There was one in 1239 and another in 1241. The latter has been taken by Muralt and others as the one just before the Emperor's death, but Prof. Heisenberg shows that the earlier date is the more probable. Prolegomena to "Acropolita," vol. ii. p. iv.

[3] 39.

eager for intellectual discussions. On one occasion Eirene asked him to explain to her the cause of an eclipse of the sun. Acropolita had not, he says, been long enough under the instruction of Blemmydas to be able to explain the matter thoroughly, but he knew that the sun had not really lost its light, but that the moon had come between sun and earth. There was with the Empress a favourite physician, not great in other sciences than his own, who regarded the views of Acropolita as new-fangled nonsense, and at the end of his explanation, which had been drawn out at some length, made objections which irritated the young man and provoked replies. The Empress, generally inclined to respect the physician's opinion, and carried away by the heat of the discussion, used a scornful term of Acropolita himself. But immediately she repented, and turning to the Emperor, said: "I ought not to have spoken so, and called him silly." "No matter," replied the Emperor, "he is only a young fellow." "No," she answered; "one ought not to use such words of those that talk philosophy." Acropolita seems only half to have believed in his scientific explanation of celestial phenomena, as, when the Empress died, it seemed to him that this event had been foreshadowed by that very eclipse,[1] and he mentally associated a comet which was seen about that time with her death and that of Asan.

[1] Prof. Bury has made a most interesting discovery, in a MS. of Oxford, of a consolatory poem addressed by Blemmydas to Vatatzes, in which the eclipse figures largely. It is taken not as foretelling, but as in various recondite ways symbolizing, the death of the Empress. Heisenberg, however, refers this poem to the death of Helen, wife of Theodore II. (Acrop., vol. ii., Intro.).

Before her death Eirene adopted the monastic habit, as her son did afterwards.[1]

The death of Asan and the succession of his son, Caloman—a minor—to the throne of Bulgaria, gave an opportunity to Vatatzes to seek for the extension of his Empire in Europe, not, however, at the expense of the Bulgarians, with whose government he remained on friendly terms, but as against Thessalonica. He is said[2] to have also signed a two years' truce with the Emperor in Constantinople, and certainly some agreement with that power seems necessary to explain the possibility of his next undertaking. His great object seems to have been to deprive John, son of Theodore Angelus, not of his power but of the red shoes and red ink which symbolized imperial claims and gave the Angeli a hope of future glory when the Empire of New Rome should enjoy its own again. Vatatzes set to work with his usual wiliness, securing by promises and flatteries the support of the blind old Theodore himself. Theodore was tempted to come to Nicæa, and there found himself in the power of his former rival. An army was prepared for the expedition into Europe, and several of the men of high family and tried ability whom Vatatzes had gathered round him took part in the undertaking. Some Coumans were taken into military service. Christopolis and other important places were secured on the way. John Angelus was inclined to resist, but his father persuaded him to submit

[1] See Consolatory Address, Acr. to J. V., in Heisenberg's "Acr.," vol. ii., with introductory note.

[2] Phil. de Mousques, p. 579. He says that those of Constantinople signed the truce with Vatatzes and with Bulgaria.

to the inevitable. At the critical moment Vatatzes received from his son Theodore—who, though only about sixteen years old, had been left, along with his bosom friend Muzalon, vicegerent in Asia —the news that the Tartars had invaded the Sultany of Iconium. Vatatzes kept the knowledge in his own breast till his present business was completed. When John Angelus had abjured all claims to imperialism, he returned to Asia, leaving Theodore Angelus in Thessalonica.

The Nicene Empire was not free from dangers, especially from the far East, though Vatatzes had settled a good many Coumans in his own dominions, and was active in constructing fortresses and arranging for their maintenance in threatened districts. But he was now in a stronger position than ever before. Thessalonica had become a client state, though, as Michael Nothus ruled in Epirus, things were not so favourable to the Nicene cause as they would have been if Theodore Angelus had accepted his overtures in 1223. Still, no other Greek power could possibly be regarded as a serious rival to the Lascarids. Bulgaria had sunk into comparative weakness after the death of its great king, and it was bound to Nicæa in a marriage alliance. The Latin rulers of Constantinople had not been able to make the most of the recent opportunities afforded by the crusading efforts of the popes. The Roman Church, which contributed a certain spiritual glamour and sometimes material help to Baldwin and his friends, was weakened by a contest with one of the foremost men of the time, who also claimed, with all his pagan proclivities, the headship of the Christian world—

Frederick II. The relations of the great contest between Popes and Hohenstauffen with the racial and religious struggles between Greeks and Franks in the East furnish an interesting series of combinations which now claim our attention.

CHAPTER IX

JOHN VATATZES AND FREDERICK II

IN following the fortunes of the Nicene emperors, we have been continually reminded of the fact that their hopes of attaining the great object of their ambition—the recovery of Constantinople—varied inversely with the influence of the Papacy in Europe. The establishment of a Latin power in Constantinople, though not due to any papal schemes, was only possible because Innocent III. had found it best to acknowledge the results of the Fourth Crusade as accomplished facts, and to proclaim the judgment of Heaven on the schismatic Greeks, even if executed by disobedient Latins. The reunion of Eastern and Western Churches by means of a reunion of Eastern and Western Empires would have seemed a simpler programme than the one actually adopted, but, as we have seen, the enmity between the Popes and the Hohenstauffen dynasty rendered any such idea chimerical. The efforts of Peter Courtenay, of John of Brienne, and of Baldwin II. to retrieve the declining fortunes of the Latin Empire—a poor exotic at best, and in need of constant help from without—had been backed up by successive popes, and if these efforts had been scanty in results, this was due either to the weakening of papal prestige, which could not arouse much crusading zeal, or to the distraction

of papal power in defence of territorial or ecclesiastical claims against lay princes. The period from 1220 to 1250 included the memorable contest of the papal power with the greatest of the Hohenstauffen—the ablest and most eminent monarch of the century—Frederick II. At the time which we have now reached, the two emperors of West and East—Frederick and John Vatatzes—perceived their common cause in resistance to the spiritual power wielded from Old Rome, and were drawn together in sympathy and alliance. The position of Frederick as champion of the anti-papal cause is well known to all students of mediæval history. Here we regard it primarily in relation to the Nicene Emperor, whose independent position with regard to the ecclesiastical power had moved Frederick to an admiring envy.

We may be allowed briefly to recapitulate the most important causes of conflict between Frederick II. and the Papacy. His position—by birth, education, and temperament—was peculiar. His father, Henry VI., had, as we have seen, married Constance, the heiress to the Norman kingdom of the Sicilies, a kingdom over which a feudal supremacy had been acknowledged in the Pope. To this part of his inheritance Frederick succeeded on the death of his father, in 1197. His claim to the imperial crown was based on three successive elections as King of the Romans, and confirmed by the death of his rival, Otto IV., in 1218, and by his own coronation in Rome in 1220. It was naturally the policy of the popes to avoid, if possible, the union of the crowns of Germany and Naples. It was also natural that they should endeavour to

maintain their hold on ecclesiastical affairs throughout Europe, and the direction of great international movements like the Crusades. There were many opportunities of collision between the spiritual and the civil heads of Western Christendom, and the possibility of any sustained co-operation between them was rendered remote by the strong will, restless ambition, and unscrupulous intellectual independence of Frederick himself. In spite of his German and Norman lineage, he always figures in history as an embodiment of the South, with a strong flavour of orientalism. Although he had received a very deficient education, he was possessed of an ardent desire for knowledge—not of the theological type dominant around him, but secular and in part pagan. In his pleasures he was not so much a transgressor of current morals as above the recognition—for himself at least—of moral restraints. In his championship of Christendom, he had no scruple against concluding equitable and profitable treaties with the infidel—he even encouraged the settlements of Saracens within his Neapolitan kingdom. He cared, apparently, far more for this kingdom than for any German lands. The university of Naples was his creation and his pride, the organization of the Neapolitan government his chief claim to statesmanship. In Germany he seems to have been something of an opportunist. He went further in his grants of privileges to the nobles and even to the Church than seemed consistent with a policy of centralization and of strong rule, such as he succeeded in establishing in South Italy. It may be that he wished to stimulate the rivalry of powers that

might otherwise unite against himself. He loved justice and order, but had naturally no sympathy with strivings for civic liberty. The rising cities of North Italy found in him as in his grandfather an uncompromising foe. Nor was he a friend to liberty of thought. True, the heretics against whom he founded an imperial inquisition might seem to be his natural allies against ecclesiastical authority.[1] But Frederick's aim with regard to such authority (at least in his later life, after compromise had proved impracticable) was not to annihilate it, but to merge it within his own imperial powers.

The most extreme assertions of his own authority, and of his perpetual opposition to papal and hierarchical wealth and political activity, were made after his second excommunication in 1239,—at about the time when we first find him in communication with the eastern Greeks. Nearly twenty years before, he had vexed Pope Honorius III. by having his eldest son crowned King of the Romans, and thereby destroying the expectations he had raised of an ultimate separation between the dominions of his house in Germany and in South Italy. Matters, however, had not then been pressed to extremities. From Honorius III., and also from Gregory IX. (who succeeded him in 1227), Frederick incurred censures through various evasions of his promise to go on a crusade. He had married as his second wife the daughter of John of Brienne, but, when, after a false start, he led his expedition into Palestine,

[1] In using this expression I do not mean to imply that, according to some recent theories, the germs of the papal Inquisition are to be sought in the schemes of Frederick himself.

it was on his own account and under papal prohibition, and even excommunication, while his father-in-law was supporting Gregory's cause with an armed force in Apulia. On Frederick's return, after he had assumed the crown of Jerusalem and made an advantageous treaty with the Sultan of Egypt, a peace was patched up at San Germano, and he was released from excommunication. But difficulties arose again in connection with his attacks on the Lombard cities, which asked the support of Gregory, and with his grant of the island of Sardinia to one of his illegitimate sons. Accordingly, in 1239, Frederick was again excommunicated. From this time, except for brief truces, Empire and Papacy were opposed in a bitter enmity which culminated when Frederick was deposed from both his thrones by the sentence of Innocent IV. at the Council of Lyons in 1245.

Frederick was never without some allies. In the pages of Matthew Paris, one sees how slight was any resentment felt in the west of Europe for the wrongs inflicted on the spiritual head of Christendom. Even the devout Louis IX. tried to reconcile Frederick with his enemies and refused the offer of the imperial crown for his brother, Robert of Artois. Meantime, the papal crusade against Frederick had taken the wind out of the sails of the other crusading movement, on behalf of Baldwin against the Greeks of Nicæa. And Frederick himself, who had many Greek subjects in Italy, was drawn to justify his position by assuming, in opposition to the papacy, the supreme sacral position which had been held for generations

by Byzantine emperors, and was claimed at that moment by John Vatatzes.

Although the interests of Frederick and of Vatatzes were equally inimical to the papal power, the personal animus with which on both sides the contest was carried on was very different in the two cases. To the Pope, Frederick was a rebellious son, who had failed in the duties of his station, as in personal gratitude to his benefactors; Vatatzes was a schismatic, who, with his court and people, stood between the successor of St Peter and his cherished desire—the reunion of the Churches. The language used by the popes against Vatatzes is perhaps as virulent as that hurled at Frederick, but Vatatzes himself seems to have had no vindictive feeling against any of the popes.[1] Frederick and Vatatzes both desired an accommodation with Rome on terms which for Rome were impossible, but the terms were dissimilar in the two cases. Frederick practically desired a renunciation by the Pope of all temporal power, especially where the political authority of crowned heads was concerned. Vatatzes wished for a compromise in matters of doctrine and discipline, that the Church of the East might be recognized in the West and the Latin patriarchate of Constantinople and consequently the Latin Empire cease to have any *raison d'être*. He might well hope that the Latin Empire would then dwindle away of itself. But to neither kind of concession could Rome at any time consent.

It is sometimes stated that in all questions relating to the reunion of the Churches, the Byzantine emperors were willing to go all reasonable lengths,

[1] Unless the letter referred to on p. 151 is genuine.

but were hindered by the obstinacy and bigotry of the clergy and people. This may have been the case in earlier times, while the Comneni still aspired to a united empire,[1] or at a later date, when compromise seemed to those in authority the only means of saving the State. But the Nicene emperors do not seem to have been ready to give up either the traditions of their Church or its independence. Some of the Emperor's most distinguished councillors were among those who argued on the Greek side in the theological controversies. The Emperor's only son, Theodore, had received a theological education and took a keen interest in the points at issue. The last hope of a settlement practically disappeared just at the time of the second and decisive excommunication of Frederick II.

This hope had been bound up with the issues of a great conference held at Nicæa and adjourned to Nymphæum, between certain emissaries of the Pope—two Dominicans and two Franciscans—and a large assembly of Greek theologians. The term *conference* is applicable here rather than *council*, because the authority and the representative character of the congress fell far short of the requirements of a General Council. The plan had been set on foot by John Vatatzes and the Patriarch Germanus, who had used the friendly offices of five friars returning to Italy after imprisonment in the Holy Land. Emperor and Patriarch seem to have been working in close co-operation,[2] but it is notable that, however keenly Vatatzes was

[1] Norden, " Papstthum und Byzanz," pp. 92, 93.

[2] The letters of Germanus and the Pope's answers are given

interested in the issue, he preferred that the necessary correspondence should be done by Germanus. The letters from Patriarch to Pope and Cardinals and the Pope's replies are full of ornate verbiage, but free from denunciations or arrogance. Each party is supposed by the other to desire the establishment of truth and the good of the Church. Each, according to Germanus, is likely to recognize its own defects if the other holds up to it the mirror of the Gospel. At the same time the letters do not give much hope of accommodation.

The Papal commissioners arrived in Nicæa in January 1234 [1] and were courteously received. At the theological discussions which occupied the congress during a great many of its sessions, the Emperor was present and made an occasional remark, but the arguments were carried on between the Italians and the "philosophers" on the Greek side. The kind of argument used may be learned from the relation of one only too ready to say: "quorum pars magna fui"—Nicephorus Blemmydas. According to his own account [2] Blemmydas came to the rescue when one of his rivals among the

by Matthew Paris in the (mistaken) year 1257. One of them, in the original Greek, has been published by Sathas, among his Greek Medieval Documents, vol. ii. The whole report of the Pope's commissioners is in Mansi's "Historia Conciliorum," vol. xxiii. See some of the documents in Pichler, "Geschichte der Trennung des Ostens und des Occidents"; Norden, "P. u. B." p. 351, *seq*; Meliarakes, p. 303, *seq.*; Blemmydas, etc.

[1] Muralt (*Chron.*, p. 346) gives 1233. But this, as Meliarakes says, neglects the fact that the Romans began the year in March.

[2] Diegesis, B., xiii. *seq.* It is a curious notion, disproved by this passage, that Blemmydas was, in this doctrinal point, on the non-Greek side.

court philosophers had been reduced to a humiliating silence, and restored the balance of the fight. In the story of the discussion, as told by the emissaries themselves, the figure of Blemmydas does not loom so large as in his own narrative, though perhaps he may be recognized as a certain "philosophus" But to do justice to the Italians, it is improbable that they should have understood a word of what Blemmydas said, and his style was not such that any interpreter, on the spur of the moment, could have made the meaning clear. The concluding sessions were held in Nymphæum, after a journey of the papal emissaries to Constantinople, for the purpose of negotiating a truce, and perhaps on the vague chance of a General Council.[1] Vatatzes had more than one original suggestion. He had proposed calling an oecumenical council, but the Italians did not welcome the proposal. He suggested a compromise, such, he said, as has to be made after a war, when places on the two sides respectively are given up. Let the Italians relinquish the *filioque*, and the Greeks might consent to the unleavened bread. This proposal, if seriously meant, was of course unacceptable to Rome. More promising, perhaps, were the efforts of Vatatzes to establish a *modus vivendi* with the papacy, without pursuing schemes of union. But here he found no middle course. The answer to his overtures was to the effect that if he became an obedient son of the Roman Church, he might hope for greater things than could be imagined — including, apparently,

[1] This seems to have been just before the close alliance of Vatatzes and Asan against Brienne. The truce, if actually signed, cannot have been very effectual.

the recognition of his patriarch as head of the See of Constantinople;—if he refused, the Pope could have no further communications with him. The choice was such in appearance only. The die was cast. We have already seen how Gregory stirred up enemies to Vatatzes in Hungary and elsewhere. Vatatzes was now in such bad odour with the papacy that an alliance with him was considered to blacken the already dark reputation of Frederick II.

The opportunity for a closer union between the two antipapal emperors was afforded by the death of the Empress Irene. Vatatzes being a widower, sought in marriage a young daughter of Frederick, Constantia by name, sister of the afterwards renowned Manfred. Constantia had not been born in wedlock, but her mother, Bianca Lancia, had subsequently, for a time, ranked as lawful wife of Frederick, and it seems that his children by her were regarded by him as on the same footing with those of entire legitimacy. Constantia is only known to the Greek chroniclers by the name of Anna, which was probably bestowed on her when she joined the Greek Church.[1] The marriage seems to have been negotiated by Elias of Cortona, the deposed General of the Franciscan Order,[2] and was probably celebrated in 1244. Very little is said on

[1] The story of Anna—Constantia—has been told, with all accessible information, by Gustave Schlumberger: "Le tombeau d'une Imperatrice Byzantine à Valence en Espagne." Paris, 1902.

[2] See Huillard-Bréholles: *Acta et Diplomata Frederici. II.*, vol. vi., 147 and note. Frederick is recommending Elias to some potentate in Cyprus. For the varied career of Brother Elias, highly interesting to Franciscan students, see his *Life* by Lempp.

the subject by the Greek chroniclers, but there exists a long nuptial poem written for the occasion by a Greek poet on the secretarial staff of Vatatzes—Nicolaus Irenikos.[1] As this epithalamium is written in a more popular style than belongs to the ordinary literature of the time, we may gather, perhaps, that the marriage itself was popular, and celebrated as an occasion of general rejoicing; while we may certainly see here another indication of the stimulus given by the Lascarid dynasty to the varied intellectual activities of their day.

This marriage was attended or succeeded by an episode which might have been expected to undo its diplomatic advantages as forming a link between the emperors. Anna being only eleven or twelve years old was accompanied by a kind of governess, or Mistress of the Robes, whose personal title, if it can be detected in Greek disguise, seems to have been the Marchioness Della Fricca. This lady, by her cleverness or beauty, acquired such an ascendancy over John Vatatzes that he accorded to her certain honours only allowed to members of the imperial family—such as that of wearing red shoes—and gave her a larger retinue even than that

[1] Krumbacher: "Byzantinische Litteratur" 768. In the pamphlet by Schlumberger just referred to, a small portion of the poem is printed on p. 9. I give a rough translation in the Appendix.

Εἰς εὐφυῆ κυπάριττον κιττὸς συναναπρέχει,
ἡ βασιλὶς κυπάριττος, κιττὸς ὁ βασιλεύς μου,
Ὁ παραδείσου κοσμικοῦ μέσον ὡραίως θάλλων,
Καὶ πάντα θέων καὶ κυκλῶν ἐν εὐλιγυστοῖς δράμοις, [Mr Alex. Pallis suggests *δράναις*]
Καὶ συλλαμβάνων εὐφυῶς καὶ στρέφων καὶ συμπλέκων
Εθνος [*? ἔθνη*] *καὶ χώρας καὶ φυλὰς καὶ πόλεις ὡς δένδρον* (*sic*) [*? τα δένδρα*].
Εἰς εὐφυῆ κυπάριττον κιττὸς συναναπρέχει,
ἡ βασιλὶς κυπάριττος, κιττὸς ὁ βασιλεύς μου.

which followed the Empress. One day the "rival empress," as Blemmydas calls her, came to the chapel of the monastery of Gregory Thaumaturgus, then under the government of Blemmydas himself, where mass was about to be celebrated. On the approach of the cortege, however, he stopped the service, and refused to let it proceed while the Marchioness was there, in spite of her rage and her tears. Since the story in its most graphic form comes from Blemmydas himself, we read—as we should expect—that a member of the Marchioness's suite attempted to kill Blemmydas, but was miraculously restrained. The most remarkable point in the whole affair is the action of Vatatzes himself. In incurring the difficulty, he seems to have acted inconsistently with his ordinary prudence, since Frederick, who seems to have been an affectionate father—so long as his children were obedient—was not likely to bear tamely an affront paid to his daughter. And in passing over the opposition of Blemmydas, who does not seem to have brought any great trouble upon himself by his boldness, he shows unexpected leniency. According to one account [1] Vatatzes was thankful for an opportunity to free himself from an undesirable *liaison*. Of the Marchioness we hear no more. The young Empress does not seem to have been a

[1] That of Nicephorus Gregoras. Blemmydas tells his own story in *Diegesis*, A., xli. *seq.* (see Appendix) and in a long encyclical letter to the monasteries under his government. Acropolita, who had probably heard of the affair from Blemmydas himself, does not mention it in the natural place, but in his summary of Vatatzes' character, to show how it had deteriorated after the death of Irene. It seems natural to expect a little exaggeration on the part of Blemmydas.

conspicuous person at the court, but to judge from her subsequent career, she must have been attractive, and at the same time able to preserve her reputation intact under difficult circumstances.

The opposition of Blemmydas may seem inconsistent with the view we have taken as to the independence of Vatatzes with regard to churchmen, in contrast with the perpetual difficulties from such quarters experienced by Frederick II. But in point of fact, Vatatzes could afford to be generous, just because he was ecclesiastically independent. A few years before, in 1240, Vatatzes had refused the dying request of the Patriarch Germanus to appoint Blemmydas his successor, but he would have allowed Blemmydas, had he consented, to act as monitor behind the scenes to the undistinguished man—Methodius—raised to the patriarchal throne.[1] And when, after a brief pontificate, Methodius died, the see was kept vacant for four years, and at the end of that time, when Manuel instead of Blemmydas was appointed, the latter was, apparently as a consolation prize, offered the headship of the imperial school. But this post also he declined, on the score of his desire for peace and quiet, which, however, he could hardly have realized along with the patriarchal dignity. The whole story of his relations with the court shows that even an independent—not to say a cantankerous—churchman could be safely used by the Eastern emperors, in furthering their controversial and

[1] This seems the natural explanation of *Diegesis*, A., xl. But here again we may hesitate to accept Blemmydas' statement. He says that he declined the office as a novelty, and as likely to lead to trouble.

educational work, without fear lest he should become politically dangerous.

The relations between Frederick and Vatatzes seem—with one or two slight disturbances, when Vatatzes felt once and again tempted at least to entertain the idea of an accommodation with Rome—to have remained cordial down to Frederick's death.[1] It may seem as if Frederick's imperial pretensions would allow no room for a second emperor in the East, with an authority similar to his own. Possibly, if he had had full scope to realize all his ideas, the *Imperator Græcorum* would have been required to take a lower place. But all through the days of the great struggle—which lasted to the end of Frederick's life and became a legacy to his sons—he liked to appear as the champion of all lay princes against the intrusion of ecclesiastical ambition. Frederick was not the only prince who has felt drawn to the doctrine of apostolic poverty, and whose ideas of reforming the Church have involved a drastic removal of all incitements to clerical avarice. But he went further than most reforming princes—except, perhaps,

[1] For Frederick's ideas in church policy, especially after his second excommunication, see Huillard-Bréholles, "Vie de Pierre de la Vigne," with letters; also the standard edition, by the same author, of Frederick's letters, with historical introduction. Among those letters are four which are also extant in Greek, and have been published by Wolf, and later by Miklosich and Müller, more accurately by Festa, in *Archivio Historico Italiano* for 1894. Two important ones, however, from Frederick to Vatatzes—about the end of the year 1248—H.-B., vol. vi., p. 685, *seq.*; and one 1247, H.-B., vi., p. 921, are not in the Greek edition. The rest were, apparently, originally written in Latin and translated into Greek by some of Frederick's Greek subjects in Italy, who generally sided with him, Festa remarks, against the Pope.

our Henry VIII.,[1] to whom he has often been compared—in asserting his own position as *supremum caput* of the Church in the lands under his sway, and inciting other princes to do the like in their own countries. In writing to Henry III. of England, he takes this attitude.[2] In a remarkable letter to Vatatzes[3] he sets forth the same view. He is actuated, he says, not only by his particular affection for Vatatzes, but by his general zeal for the principles of monarchic government—Cæsar may well be above envy, and have a regard for the rights of others. "All we, kings and princes of the earth, especially those orthodox in religion and zealous for the faith, cherish a public and common enmity towards the bishops, and a special inward opposition to the primates of our Church." After inveighing against the abuse of liberty and privilege on the part of western ecclesiastics, he breaks out: "O happy Asia! O happy Powers in the East; that fear not the arms of subjects and dread not the interference of pontiffs."

Frederick was, as we have seen, no favourer of heretics when their peculiarities were due to what he considered any kind of disaffection against public order, whether in doctrine or in life. But the Greek Church has, generally speaking, been

[1] Huillard-Bréholles not only compares Frederick II. to Henry VIII., but his faithful minister, Piero della Vinea, to Thomas Cromwell, whose career and fate were certainly somewhat similar to Vinea's. I am, of course, aware that recent critics are disposed to think that Huillard-Bréholles overrates the importance of Frederick's ecclesiastical ideals. But his views seem to derive confirmation from a study of Frederick's correspondence with Vatatzes.

[2] See Matthew Paris.

[3] H.-B., vi. p. 685.

sufficiently respectful to constituted authority, and without concerning himself in the points which separated it from Rome, he chose to regard it as conspicuously orthodox. Thus he wrote to Michael II. of Epirus [1] "For we desire to vindicate not only our own rights but those of our neighbours, who are our friends and esteemed by us, those whom pure and sincere love in Christ has bound together with us, and especially the Greeks, our kinsmen and friends, respecting whom the above-mentioned Pope, referring to our relation and friendship with them—most Christian people, abiding by the most earnest faith in Christ—has moved his unbridled tongue, calling the most pious Greeks impious, and the most orthodox heretical." And again, in a letter to Vatatzes himself [2]: "This man who calls himself the great high-priest, he who every day, and in the presence of all, hurls charges against you and all the Romans (Ῥωμαίους), calling by the name of heretics those most orthodox Romans from whom the faith of Christ went forth to all the world"; and he goes on to say very bitter things against the Pope's emissaries, the friars, by whose means Innocent IV. seems to have been hoping to bring about a renewal of negotiations.

It was tangible as well as moral support that Frederick hoped to obtain, and did in some measure receive from Vatatzes. In the letter quoted to Michael Nothus, he requested that prince to allow passage through his territories to the troops that Vatatzes was sending to help in his Italian struggle

[1] H.-B., iv. p. 760. First Letter in Festa.
[2] H.-B., vi. p. 774. Letter III. in Festa.

against the papal forces. This was in February 1250. In the subsequent letters to Vatatzes himself,[1] Frederick makes it evident that the aid was sent.[2] He relies upon the sympathy and support of Vatatzes, and promises to do nothing without his counsel. These letters describe a victory won over the Parmese and their allies by Frederick's captain, the Marquis of Pelavicino, on August 18th, 1250; the taking of the city of Cingoli, in the March of Ancona by the Count Walter of Manupello on the twentieth of the same month; and the capture of sixteen Genoese galleys by twelve imperial at Savona early in September, as well as other successes, including one of his own son Conrad in Germany. To judge by Frederick's own account, his condition was by no means so desperate in the year preceding his death as some historians suppose. It is a notable fact that Frederick received a special message from Vatatzes on his recovery of the Island of Rhodes,[3] and sent in return a warm congratulation. Rhodes had been seized by the Genoese during the absence of the governor, John Gabalas (brother of the "Cæsar," friend of Blemmydas).[4] The Emperor had sent

[1] The exact dates of the letters, and even the order in which some of them were written, is not quite clear. For the chronology and for a comparison of Frederick's accounts with those of the chroniclers, see Festa, loc. cit., p. 9.

[2] In the second letter in Festa, he mentions *Pergamene* soldiers.

[3] Or more exactly: his successes in the neighbourhood of the Island of Rhodes. But this probably relates to its recovery; see Acropolita, 48. His chronology is uncertain. Bury and Hopf put this event down to 1246; but if the letter of Frederick is rightly dated by H.-B. (there is no date in the text), May or June 1250, it must have happened later.

[4] See above, p. 145.

forces to recover it which had for a time achieved little success, since the city of Rhodes could not easily be shut off from supplies by sea. Meantime the Prince of Achaia and the Peloponnesus, on his way to join the crusade of St Louis, came into the neighbourhood, made a treaty with the Genoese, and on his departure left some forces in Rhodes. Thereupon Vatatzes gathered together a sufficient fleet in Smyrna, which he despatched against Rhodes, under the Protosebastos, Theodore Contostephanus. The city was obliged, after the slaughter of many Genoese and Franks, to surrender to the Greek forces, and henceforth it is reunited to the Empire. As the Genoese were also the enemies of Frederick, his pleasure at their discomfiture is natural.

It will have been observed that in his friendly feeling towards the Greeks, Frederick did not take much account of the rivalries among the various Greek potentates in the Balkan Peninsula and Asia Minor.[1] He had been in friendly intercourse with Theodore of Thessalonica, and had declined to urge the Montferrat claims on that province, to which he had himself succeeded. He was also, as we have seen, in correspondence with Michael II. of Epirus. It would be interesting to know with what feelings he followed the campaigns of Vatatzes in Europe, which will concern us in the next

[1] Frederick's policy towards the Greek princes, and their relations with him, are traced by Norden (P. and B., p. 317 *seq.*). But one is inclined to suggest that he attributes too much importance to the statements of Ph. Mousques, that Vatatzes, Theodore of Thessalonica, and Asan of Bulgaria promised to do homage to Frederick II., if he would drive the Franks out of Constantinople.

chapter. At the same time that he was hand-in-glove with the schismatic Greek Emperor, he was supplying the needs of the crusading King of France, whose services with the Pope might, he hoped, lead to a removal of his excommunication. But from the entanglements of his inconsistent alliances as from the persecutions of his dire foes, Frederick was liberated by death, near Lucera, in S. Italy, in December 1250. His plans, ecclesiastical and diplomatic, perished with him. His son, Conrad IV., who succeeded him both in Sicily and Germany, showed no great ability during the few years of his reign. Manfred (whole brother of the Empress Anna), who held the principality of Taranto, and acted as regent for his brother in S. Italy and Sicily, seems to have inherited some of his father's spirit and abilities. But his hands were fully taken up in resisting the pretenders and the political enemies whom Innocent IV. aroused against his house.

John Vatatzes seems to have consistently maintained his alliance with the Hohenstauffen, though we have more than one suggestion of renewed negotiations with the papacy. There had been one such already in 1247, which had incurred a vigorous rebuke from Frederick II., another, as we have seen, which led to further remonstrance from him in 1250, and there was another in 1254.[1] On the whole, however, he does not seem to have acted with anything but fidelity to the general cause. His demands seem to have always amounted to the same: the Greeks would join the Latin Church

[1] *I.e.*, unless our informants are confusing more than one occasion.

if they might do so without sacrificing their own traditions; and in return they expected at least the ecclesiastical restoration of Constantinople. Surely such requests were likely to meet with but one answer at Rome, and they can hardly have been made except with a view to gain time and avoid the charge of extreme obstinacy.

Meantime new difficulties arose between imperial courts of East and West, on a matter unconnected with the Church. Conrad had exiled some members of the Lancia family, close kinsfolk of Manfred and of the Eastern Empress Anna. These fled to the Nicene Court, where they received hospitality. An eminent official of Conrad, Bertholdt, Marquis of Hohenburg, was sent on an embassy to settle matters.[1] The issue is not quite clear, but the embassy seems to have given a good deal of entertainment to Theodore, son of Vatatzes, who, in his father's absence, had to deal with it. Matters seem to have been arranged without a breach. But, as we shall see, the death of Conrad and of Vatatzes in the same year, 1254, led to a new series of events and combinations.

It may seem that the connection between Lascarids and Hohenstauffen is too slight to be taken as an important historical fact. But though based primarily on negative conditions—the fact that both were outside Catholic Europe—the alliance and the interchange of letters and embassies may have borne some fruit. Frederick was almost certainly encouraged in his assertion of ecclesiastical supremacy—one might say of superhuman

[1] Letters of Theodore Ducas, 125. Cf. Jamsilla, *apud* Murat., viii.

dignity—by the example of the ceremonies, phraseology, and actual authority in religious affairs, which had always belonged to the heads of New Rome. Vatatzes was the more secure in his position and of the ultimate success of his dynasty in recovering Constantinople, because of the resistance to papal claims made by Frederick II. and all his race. And even if their ecclesiastical sympathies were strong on but few points, they stand together as promoters of culture and as heralds of the Renaissance.

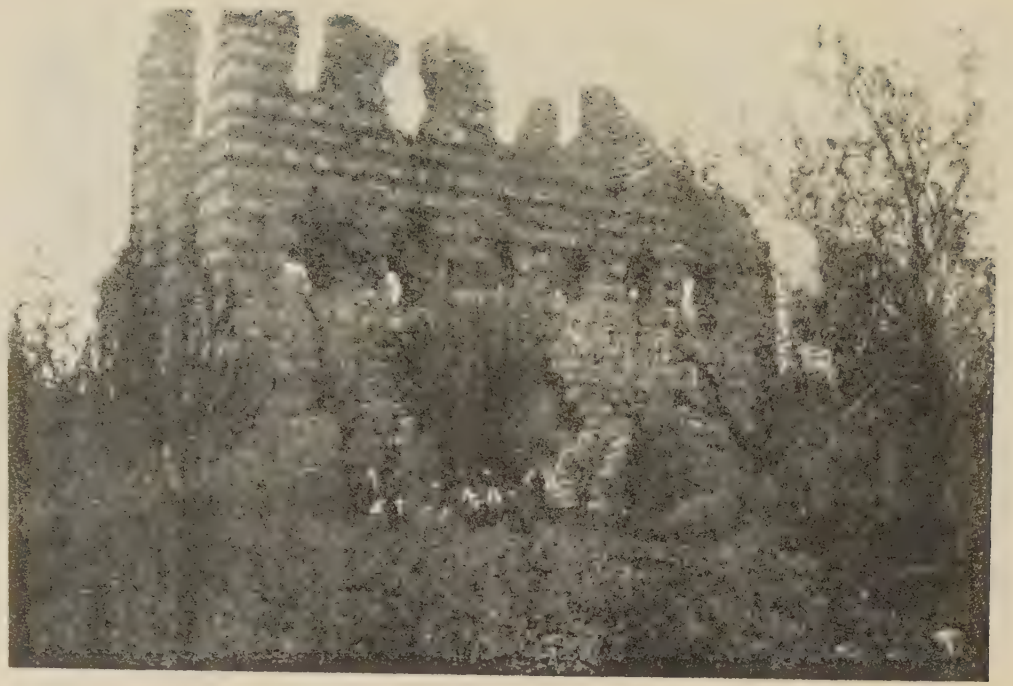
CHAPTER X

SUCCESSFUL EXPEDITIONS OF VATATZES AGAINST BULGARIA AND THESSALONICA—TROUBLES WITH MICHAEL PALÆOLOGUS — DEATH OF VATATZES —HIS SUBSEQUENT REPUTATION

AS previously related, in the winter of 1243, Vatatzes having settled for the time being the affairs of Thessalonica,[1] returned to Asia, and spent some months in Nymphæum, which had become his favourite residence. This place is situated about fifteen miles to the east of Smyrna, and somewhat less to the south of Magnesia, from which it is separated by the high mountain range of Sipylus. Magnesia also was an important place under the Lascarids, and on the mountain slopes two large monasteries were founded by Vatatzes and the Empress Irene respectively. Of the monasteries hardly a trace remains,[2] but the shell of the banqueting hall of Nymphæum stands complete, a stately ruin in a region of great interest and beauty. The fertility of the valley, with its orchards of cherry and peach-trees must have made the spot attractive,

[1] See above, p. 156 seq.

[2] In the works of Blemmydas, there are two poems in honour of the monastery of Sosandra, which will concern us later on. For the rival theories of Agathangelos and Fontrier as to its site, see the interesting article of Prof. A. Heisenberg, *Kaiser Johannes der Barmherzige*, in the *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, vol. xiv.



PALACE OF NYMPHAEUM

but its strategical position was the chief factor in its importance, since it was on the main road from Smyrna to Sardis, and was connected by inferior roads or bridle-paths with the valleys of the Cayster and the Mæander, so that thence, as from a watch-tower, the Emperor could keep an eye on hostile movements from north or east.[1] This winter (1243-1244) was a very severe one, and the Emperor lost a good many troops on a march near Pegæ, the exact object of which is not specified. Soon afterwards,[2] he took steps to meet the danger of which news had been brought to him before Thessalonica—the rapid advance of the Tartars, who were threatening the Sultanate of Iconium. The precaution he took was to secure a defensive and offensive alliance with the Sultan Iathatines. Both religious sentiment and the traditions of his family were against such an alliance, but the world was becoming used to treaties with infidels. In fact, not long after, we hear from Matthew Paris[3] of an embassy sent by the Tartars to Pope Innocent IV. proposing alliance against Vatatzes, an embassy which, if not exactly successful, was at least well received. The treaty between Vatatzes and the Sultan was arranged by the two sovereigns personally at Tripolis on the Mæander. On its conclusion,

[1] The strategical importance of Nymphæum was pointed out by Dr Freshfield, in a paper read to the Society of Antiquaries in 1886, in which the Byzantine palace was identified as that of the Lascarids.

[2] The chronology is not easy. Acropolita would lead one to suppose that Vatatzes spent two winters with part of a summer at Nymphæum before his visit to the Sultan. Muralt puts the Congress of Tripolis *before* the winter misfortune at Pegæ.

[3] Under year 1248.

Vatatzes withdrew to Philadelphia and the Sultan returned to Iconium. War between Turks and Tartars continued, to the disadvantage of the former, and the Sultan met his end in the course of a few years.

Meantime, Vatatzes used the short period of leisure between his wars to restore, as far as possible, peace and prosperity in the desolated provinces of the East.[1] Mention has already been made of his fortress-building and provision of stores. He endeavoured to provide for the poor and the sick by means of hospitals, and, with an eye to the permanent interests of the State, he set about the encouragement of agriculture and manufactures. Vatatzes was himself a successful amateur farmer. He once presented his wife with a chaplet of pearls purchased from the sale of eggs on his estates. He was annoyed to see his subjects wearing luxurious clothes which had been produced by Italians and other foreigners, and issued an edict to protect the manufacturing industry of the provinces, for which even the Turks now provided a market. The regulation of trade and industry was entrusted to his own officials, who had probably been trained under his own eye.

About this time two deaths occurred which gave opportunity for further intervention in European affairs—that of John of Thessalonica in 1244 and that of Caloman of Bulgaria in 1246. Both were succeeded by young and weak brothers. Demetrius of Thessalonica was a great contrast to his brother John, though neither of them seems to have inherited the qualities of their father, Theodore Ducas

[1] Nic. Gregoras, ii. 6.

Angelus. John had been a man of gentle and pious disposition, apparently without much ambition. Demetrius was a handsome libertine, without either character or ability. Vatatzes probably left the disaffection, which must necessarily arise against his conduct, to gather to a head before he endeavoured to manipulate it for his own purposes. The state of things in Bulgaria was not altogether dissimilar. The times needed a strong man, and the heir of Caloman was an infant, Michael, the son of Asan and Irene, daughter of Theodore Angelus. This lady forms a link between the Bulgarian and Epirot dynasties, since she was also sister to Demetrius of Thessalonica.[1] There was evidently a strong party among the Bulgarians in favour of the Nicene dynasty. Probably Greeks and Bulgarians were a good deal intermixed, and whichever dynasty obtained the upper hand, the future ruler would be half-Greek and half-Bulgarian by blood.

To attack the dominions of a minor prince, the successor of friends and allies, may seem a dastardly action—but it does not seem to have been regarded as such by contemporary writers. It was probably taken for granted that the Nicene Empire must needs seek to expand when opportunity offered, and John Vatatzes seems not to have taken the offensive till he had made sure of encouragement from some of the Bulgarians themselves. He set out for Thrace nominally for the purpose of visiting and strengthening his late acquisitions in those parts. He did not take with him a sufficient army for purposes of conquest, but he seems, with an eye to the future, to have surrounded himself with a

[1] See Genealogical Tree.

company of his ablest men.[1] He advanced as far as Philippi, and there he held a council of war, and propounded the questions following: Was it, or was it not, expedient to attempt now the recovery of places taken by Bulgarians from the Empire, and in particular should they lay siege to the neighbouring town of Serrhæ? Most of the councillors disapproved any such act of aggression, on grounds not of morality but of expediency. The scale, however, was turned to the other side by the advice of the great Domesticus, Andronicus Palæologus. In point of fact, Serrhæ was captured without much difficulty. Certain barbarous auxiliaries of the Emperor's army—Tzucalonae—made a violent onset, and there was little resistance. The commandant, a Bulgarian named Dragotas, accepted the cloak of purple and gold which was the price of his surrender, and promised to secure for Vatatzes the peaceable acquisition of the neighbouring city of Melenicus. It is curious to see, however, that in this town, as possibly in Serrhae, the citizens had a distinct will of their own, and that they were readily induced to take the imperial side. One of the principal men of Melenicus, Manclavites by name, taking courage by the conduct and reward of Dragotas, worked upon the feelings of his fellow-citizens in public orations. He reminded them that though they had put up with the government of a boy, in the hope that he would grow into a man, it would be foolish now to submit to an infant, rather than to the Roman Emperor, known to be 'a steadfast warrior, able to distinguish good

[1] See Acropolita, 44. It is to be noted that for this and the following portion of the history, Acropolita is an eye-and-ear-witness.

councillors from bad, and having ancient claims on their allegiance. For they were themselves Roman, having come from the Roman city of Philippopolis, and even if they were Bulgarians, the Emperor's son and heir was husband of a Bulgarian princess. The people were convinced, and a deputation was sent to the Emperor, who accepted the surrender, and granted the citizens a Golden Bull, the conditions of which, unfortunately, have not been preserved. In the end, the Emperor secured as subject to himself most of the places on the slopes of the Rhodope Mountains and to the south of the Hebrus (or Maritza), together with some regions considerably to the west.[1] The regents for the young Michael had to assent to a very considerable diminution of his kingdom, on condition that the Emperor refrained from further acquisitions.

The conquest of Southern Bulgaria was thus effected with little bloodshed. The turn of Thessalonica was to follow, and here also fortune favoured the Emperor—unless we may attribute to a watchful diplomacy on his part what seemed to his courtiers due entirely to the goodwill of Heaven. Demetrius had, as we have seen, excited disaffection by his licentious conduct. A band of conspirators was formed, who were in communication with John Vatatzes. The unfortunate youth was so unsuspicious as to commit one of the conspirators, who had been accused of double-

[1] Acropolita (44) mentions: Stenimachus and Tzepæna; Stumpium Chotobos, and Belebudium; Scopia, Belesus, and the territory as far as Prilapus and Pelagonia; Neustapolis and Prosacus. He had impressed the imperial seal on letters sent to each surrendered city.

dealing, to the custody of another, from whom he received a mock flagellation. When the Emperor with his army reached Thessalonica, the city fell an easy prey. A band of soldiers was admitted by a postern gate, and Vatatzes himself came in through the chief entrance. Here a dramatic scene was enacted. Irene, daughter of Theodore Angelus and widow of Asan, rode out to meet the conqueror, and to implore grace for her brother Demetrius, who, in his youthful beauty and his misfortunes, might seem to deserve pity. Irene had once, by her beauty and her persuasiveness, restored her father's fortunes, now she saved her brother's eyes. The Emperor courteously alighted from his chariot as she dismounted from her horse, and stood to confer with her. The Despotat of Thessalonica ceased to exist, but Demetrius was spared, though taken away and kept in custody at Lentiana. The country was put under the control of Andronicus Palæologus, the "Great Domestic," who had first advised the attack on Serrhæ. This place, with Melenicus, was entrusted to his son, Michael Palæologus, with whom we shall have much to do later. Perhaps it was the one weak joint in the otherwise impervious armour of John Vatatzes, that he was almost compelled to entrust large powers to members of the great Byzantine houses, whose importance well-nigh equalled his own. If he had been able to establish an official hierarchy directly dependent on himself, many troubles might have been averted from his dynasty, and perhaps from the whole empire.

After a winter spent, as usual, at Nymphæum,

Vatatzes prepared in the following spring (1247), an expedition against some of the towns in Thrace still under the Latins, with whom one of the ephemeral truces that hardly break the monotony of a half-century of war had just expired. He attacked Tzurulus, which, as will be remembered [1] the Franks had reconquered for Baldwin in 1240. The commandant was the sometime regent, Anseau de Cahieu, husband of Eudocia, sister of the late Empress Irene. He had gone away, hoping, perhaps, that Eudocia would prevail on her brother-in-law to retreat or to grant easy terms. As a matter of fact, Vatatzes captured the city, and sent the lady, with one horse, back to Constantinople. He soon after acquired the neighbouring town of Bizya. It was about this time that, as related in the last chapter,[2] Rhodes was recovered for the Emperor. Other islands of the Ægean were also brought under his control.

Though there was at present little to fear from the former Greek or semi-Greek rivals of the Nicene Empire, there was one western power that seemed worth conciliating—that of Michael Nothus, despot of Epirus. A marriage was arranged between Michael's second son Nicephorus and Mary, daughter of Vatatzes' son Theodore. Theodora, the saintly wife of the despot, brought the boy to Pegæ, where he was solemnly affianced to the little girl. But the peace was soon broken by the machinations of one whose restless spirit neither age nor blindness nor the experience of his adversaries' strength could ever reduce to quiescence—Theodore Angelus.

[1] See above, p.152.

[2] See above, p. 175, perhaps not till a year or two later.

He had, as we have seen,[1] been left in possession of a small territory, which included Bodena and the neighbouring towns to the east of the country ruled from Thessalonica. He seems to have had some influence with his nephew, Michael Nothus, and to have incited him to attack the Thracian cities that had recently submitted to Vatatzes. Probably Michael did not need much incitement. He had been extending his dominions of late, and in all probability he saw signs of friction between the Greek or Slavonic natives and the officials put in charge by the Emperor. In any case, Vatatzes saw the necessity of making extensive arrangements. Early in the spring of 1251, he crossed the Hellespont with a formidable army. In this, as in others of his later campaigns, he seems to have been accompanied not only by competent military leaders, but by a whole staff of secretaries —often court officials. He came to Bodena, whence Theodore retreated before him to take refuge with Michael. Vatatzes sent expeditions to devastate the country under Michael's jurisdiction, while to meet the necessities of his army, he had to organize supplies of provision from Berœa. The campaign, prolonged into the winter, was a severe one, but the imperial host was cheered by the arrival of some magnates who had relations both with Michael and with some of the courtiers of Nicæa. By these defections and especially by the securing of the town Castoria, a way was opened up to the invaders right into the Epirot country. Michael thought it best to send an embassy to Vatatzes, demanding peace, and offering to cede

[1] See above, p. 144.

Prilapus, Belesus, and other important places on the Albanian frontier. Vatatzes sent certain officials —among them the historian, George Acropolita, to confer with Michael in his important town of Larissa. Terms were agreed upon, and the title of *Despot*, under the Emperor's suzerainty, was confirmed to Michael and extended to his son Nicephorus. Vatatzes visited some of the cities furthest west that now owned his supremacy before he returned to Asia. Old Theodore Angelus was brought a prisoner to Vatatzes, and this time he was allowed to return no more.

While he was still at Bodena, Vatatzes received complaints against one of his foremost generals and councillors, Michael Palæologus. It is notable that they were first brought by Manclavites of Melenicus, to whose oratory [1] (not to say demagogic arts) the Emperor owed the possession of that city. It would be interesting to know whether the conditions of the Golden Bull accorded to the citizens had been disregarded by Palæologus, who now held authority there. His father, the Great Domestic, Andronicus, was now dead, and Michael was head of his house and more illustrious by birth as well as more popular with the soldiers than any other of the Nicene nobles. It was rumoured that he had schemes for marrying a Bulgarian princess, and setting himself over the newly acquired cities of Thrace. The immediate cause of suspicion was trivial enough: the death of Demetrius Tornices, which Michael had taken so much to heart as to suggest that it implied for him a political disappointment. Tornices had stood high in the confidence

[1] See above, p. 184.

of Vatatzes, and had enjoyed great influence.[1] He was related by marriage to Palæologus, and may possibly have had some schemes in connection with him, but on this point no evidence is forthcoming. A citizen of Melenicus who talked freely about the supposed plans of Palæologus, was accused by one of his interlocutors and worsted in single combat with him. But, though put to torture and afterwards threatened with death, the accused man declared that he had nothing to say which might inculpate Palæologus. Michael was, however, taken into custody, and after the Emperor had reached Philippi, on his return journey, an investigation was held into the charges lately brought against him. It was suggested that Michael should purge his character by the ordeal of red-hot iron. He rejected the notion on common-sense grounds. He was a man, not a statue from the hands of Phidias or Praxiteles, and could not expect that the red-hot iron would spare him. The Emperor sent a notable ecclesiastic, Phocas the Metropolitan of Philadelphia, to try his powers of persuasion. But Palæologus was equal to the occasion. He was, he said, a sinful man, who could not expect a miracle to be worked in his favour. But if the bishop would take the hot iron from the altar, where it had been in proximity to the Host, into his own holy hands, and place it in those of Michael, the case would be different. The bishop declined the honour. The ordeal, he

[1] The name Tornices or Tornicius figures several times in the correspondence of Michael Acominatus. His last letter was written to a young man of that name—probably to this very man—grandson or nephew of an old friend.

said, was not an ecclesiastical institution, but of barbarian origin. This was, of course, sufficient to give Michael an opportunity of escape. Why should he, a Roman of Romans, submit to a barbarian test? The bishop, now frankly on his side, went to the Emperor and prevailed on him to let Michael have a fair trial. The result was that he was acquitted, though he was for a time regarded with suspicion, and lost his hopes of marrying one of the Emperor's granddaughters. On the return of court and army to Asia, Michael was sent to the Patriarch Manuel, who bound him with mighty oaths to attempt nothing against the government. He was subsequently gratified by obtaining the hand of another royal lady, Theodora, granddaughter of the Emperor's brother, Isaac Ducas.

Although the story of Michael's danger and escape rests on the authority of an eye-witness and one of his judges—the historian Acropolita—some mystery must still attach to the whole affair. Acropolita intends to give the notion that Michael was innocent, and that Vatatzes was anxious even to strain the forces of justice to secure his condemnation, but dreaded his popularity with the soldiery. But neither Palæologus himself nor his admirer, Acropolita, was thoroughly imbued with loyalty to the Lascarid dynasty, nor is Acropolita uniformly fair in his judgments of Vatatzes. One interesting and curious point which comes out emphatically is the Græco-Roman contempt for the barbarous mode of deciding guilt or innocence by appeal to ordeal. Commentators on the event have pointed to cases of the use of the ordeal in the Byzantine system, but, however far back its origins may lie

in the mists of the past, there can be no doubt that, in its developed forms, it was an introduction from the West, and despised on the same ground as other western institutions. It may be noticed that trial by battle—an equally irrational and "barbarian," or at least primitive, proceeding—was not, at least, regarded as equally offensive to those of noble blood. Michael was ready to defend himself in single combat, as his unfortunate partizan in Melenicus had done. On the whole, it seems that he had a fair trial, by men of his own standing, and was acquitted because, whatever his secret intentions may have been, nothing could be proved against him.

The long and successful reign of John Vatatzes was drawing to a close. He had for some time suffered from epileptic seizures [1]—which seem to have been congenital, as his son inherited the disease. He kept up his normal activity as long as possible, being carried in a litter when, by the violence of the attacks, he was liable to fall from his horse. He celebrated a triumph and kept Easter at his favourite residence of Nymphæum in 1255, but a severe attack of his malady led him to proceed to Smyrna, apparently in hope of relief from some special cult of the Saviour peculiar to that place.[2] But as the disease did not abate, he was carried back to Nymphæum, and laid in a tent in the palace gardens. There he breathed his last, on the thirtieth of October, at the age

[1] I gather this from the fact that his malady seems to have been inherited by his son. Apoplexy (the name given to his illness) is not heritable—but epilepsy distinctly is so.

[2] There seems to have been some famous icon there. But I can find no trace of it.

of sixty-two years, of which he had reigned thirty-three.

The character of Vatatzes is not very clearly discerned through the testimony of contemporaries, but it may be that some of them, who wrote under the rising star of a rival dynasty, give an impression more favourable than that which they desire to convey. His reign was certainly successful in a remarkable degree, and there can be no doubt that the success was mainly due to his own watchful activity and wary diplomacy. When he came to the throne, he was but one of several Greek or semi-Greek princes holding claims to all or part of the Empire of the East, and the case of the Latin Empire was by no means defunct. When he died, the Latin cause was evidently hopeless; its claims in Asia had been reduced to a nullity; and in Europe its territory was greatly diminished. Thessalonica, from being an Empire, had become first a despotat, and finally a client state of the Empire of Nicæa; Bulgaria had on the one hand been forwarded on the path of Hellenization; on the other it had been greatly reduced in territory; the despotat of Epirus remained, but it had lately received a good stout blow and did not seem likely to recover. Furthermore, Vatatzes had by diplomacy reduced the Turks to quiet and kept the Tartars at bay. He had watched over the navy as well as the army recovered Rhodes, and made his name respected among the Italian dynasties that ruled in the Ægean Islands. His power had been recognized by the ablest monarch of the Western world, and the weight of obligation between the two emperors was certainly not against Vatatzes.

He had founded a splendid royal residence in a strong position commanding the chief roads from the port of Smyrna to the interior. Furthermore, he had done what he could to restore agriculture, manufactures, and commerce, in lands lately devastated by war. Magnificent where magnificence told effectively, generous to churches and monasteries, and ready to assist men of letters, he grudged his son an ornamental coat which represented, as he said, pain and toil on the part of the poor and suffering.

Besides his generosity to scholars, he showed his zeal for learning by the careful education he provided for his son, and by the interest he took in conferences and arguments on theological and other learned subjects. Blemmydas accused him of preferring, after the death of Germanus, to have ignorant men rather than scholars for his patriarchs. But if learning alone had been regarded, the choice must needs have fallen on Blemmydas himself, and as the history of the next reign was to show, the views of Blemmydas as to relations of ecclesiastical and secular authorities might prove a hindrance to a Greek Emperor. Vatatzes seems certainly to have been exceedingly generous to Blemmydas himself after his bold conduct with regard to the Marchioness, the only recorded case—and that a somewhat doubtful one—in which private fancy had led the Emperor to neglect considerations of dignity and public duty. His conduct here resembles his treatment of another ecclesiastic whom he admitted to high favour because once when asked his opinion, he replied, "But what is the use, Sire, of asking us what we think, when you always do what you

think good?" But this story also illustrates one of the weak points of John Vatatzes himself, or at least in his circumstances and position. He was, after all, an autocrat, and could not, as fate determined, be anything else. But autocrats have to work through human agents, and human agents may turn recalcitrant.

It is a curious and interesting point that the memory of John Vatatzes received a popular canonization. An order of service has been discovered by which men sought that help from him after death which had been so potent during his life. The biographical notices concerning him in the service-book have no claim to historical accuracy. Thus—to take one point only—they give to him, who concluded a diplomatic agreement with the Sultan, the honour of his father-in-law, who killed a sultan in single combat. Yet popular feeling was right. John III. was a devoted champion of his people and his church. In spite perhaps of some moral soilures, he did good service to Christendom. And though guilty of severities which may seem to us inhuman, he merited the title given to him as saint of "John the Merciful."[1] He is one of those mythopœic characters whose traditional after-life makes them in a sense familiar to many who know

[1] See Meliarakes, p. 417 *seq.*; also *Byz. Zeit.*, vol. xiv., in which Dr A. Heisenberg gives in full the *Encomium* written by a monk of Magnesia in the middle of the fourteenth century, with a discussion of its worth and an account of a later Greek biography. If these works bring no new facts to light, the local traditions which they embody are of great service in determining the topography of the favourite dwellings and benefactions of the Lascarids. The monk of Magnesia, too, in his classical culture, bears testimony to the deep impress left by the Nicene emperors on the civilization of Asia Minor.

nothing of their acts and fortunes. To this day, the clergy and people of Magnesia and the neighbourhood revere his memory every fourth of November. But those who ramble and play about his ruined palace seldom connect it even with his name.

GENERAL VIEW OF MAGNESIA

CHAPTER XI

THEODORE LASCARIS II. (OR DUCAS)—HIS EDUCATION, CHARACTER, AND PRINCIPLES—WARS AND NEGOTIATIONS IN EAST AND WEST

ON the death of John Vatatzes, the succession of his son Theodore followed without dispute. Theodore was now about thirty-three years old, having been born in 1222, the year of his father's accession. He had already held authority in conducting military and diplomatic affairs, and had twice held the regency during his father's absence in Thrace.[1] Except for some slight misunderstandings,[2] he seems to have been always on satisfactory terms with his father, for whose memory he cherished —not in words only—a loyal affection. Vatatzes had departed from the common custom, in not having his son formally associated with him during his own life-time. His reason is said to have been that he considered the position of an assured heir-apparent a difficult one, especially from the insidious suggestions of flatterers. He probably acted here with

[1] See above, p. 157 and p. 183.

[2] Such as might be gathered from Letter 78 (Festa) against some calumniators. In Letter 108 he blames the Bishop of Ephesus for showing a letter, without his leave, to his father. It seems unlikely that Vatatzes would have made much of Theodore's wearing an expensive coat (see above, p.194) if there were more serious grounds of disapproval. Of Theodore's views as to the affair of the Marchioness we have no information.

his usual discernment, and with a due regard to Theodore's sensitive character. He is also said to have considered a sovereign's position more assured if he received authority from the people, and not only from his predecessor. The popular choice of Theodore as Emperor was hardly a democratic election, but at least he was chosen by Senate and Army, and raised aloft on a shield as a sign of supremacy.[1]

The advent of a monarch who also claims to be a philosopher, and who, at a ripe age, comes to his task equipped not only with the experience gained in the council chamber or the military tent of his predecessor, but also with the enlightened views that ought to be the result of much reading and pondering on the nature of the state and of the universe, always brings hope and opens up possibilities. This was eminently the case with Theodore Lascaris. He had sat at the feet of Acropolita and of Acropolita's master, Blemmydas. He had absorbed all the Greek learning that was then attainable, and this—to a pupil of Blemmydas the book-hunter—meant a good deal. He had familiarized himself with portions of Plato, Aristotle, and some of the Neo-Platonists and Stoics, and had shown great zeal in physical and mathematical studies.[2] He had also read a considerable amount of patristic literature, and had himself written in defence of the dogmatic position of the Greeks as against the Latins,[3] as well as a treatise on the

[1] See especially Gregoras, L. iii. c. 1, and *cf.* Acropolita, 111.

[2] See letters, *passim*; also his "De Communione Naturali," in Migne, *C. P. G.*, 140; and Δήλωσις Κοσμική, recently published by N. Festa.

[3] "De Processione Sancti Spiritus," ed. by H. B. Swete.

Divine Names, after Dionysius the Areopagite. To general literature—especially the poets—he seems to have given some attention.[1] He certainly loved study above all other occupations, and he believed in learning as the best of all acquisitions. This belief he showed not only in his letters and treatises, but in his practical arrangements for the instruction of his subjects by the foundation of libraries, by favour shown to the learned, and by grants enabling young men to pursue their studies as long as possible.[2] His literary tastes and habits, together with his high regard for a large number of equally literary friends, made him a prolific letter-writer. Thus the modern reader might hope, in coming to the story of his reign, to find the whole outlook clearer and the mainsprings of political and ecclesiastical action, with the contributions of individual persons to the general historical result, laid bare to every student. But even as the people of that time—like the people of other times who have dreamed of a golden age coming in with a wise and benevolent despot—were doomed to disappointment,[3] so the modern reader finds that the abundance of literary material from the

[1] Neither in history nor in theology was he a very deep scholar. He regarded Marcus Aurelius as having more affinity with rhetoricians than with philosophers (*De com. nat.*, v. 7). He seems to have thought that Leo the Great attended the Council of Chalcedon in person (*De Pr. S.S.*). In a letter to the Patriarch Manuel (Festa, 99) he shows a surprising ignorance of the nature of the Iconoclastic Controversy, in taking λατρεία as equivalent to προσκύνησις or τιμή, a confusion which might make Theodore the Studite turn in his grave.

[2] Anon., *apud* Sathas ; *cf.* Letter 217.

[3] " Their hopes were like burned-out ashes," as some MSS. of Acropolita have it.

hands of the Emperor himself and of his *savants* leaves more problems than it solves and requires more learning and acumen for its interpretation than is generally considered adequate to the historian's task—certainly very far more than the present writer has at command.[1]

The reason why we can only gain fragmentary knowledge from Theodore's writings—especially his letters—is to be found in the unfortunate rhetorical style of his day, which was averse to stating any facts, and always preferred generals to particulars. Thus in writing to the Pope and Cardinals about the reunion of the Churches,[2] he wanders off about the inherence of something in something else, and the relation of Matter to the Deity, and never comes to a definite point. Worse still, when he is describing a journey or a campaign, he never thinks of putting his experiences and actions clearly before his readers, but deals in vague similitudes, irrelevant quotations, and unintelligible innuendos. Perhaps if he had realized that among his readers would be some belonging to a period many centuries distant, from whom his mode of thought and expression was far removed, he might have followed a different course.

But apart from Theodore's literary style, we have always to be on our guard in receiving or rejecting the estimates of his literary contemporaries. Those

[1] There is a little book which professes to tell us all about Theodore II., from his own and contemporary writings, by Jean Pappadopoulos (Paris, 1908), but it is inadequate, though not without use. It is very severely criticized in *Byz. Zeit.*, 1909, by Nicolas Festa, who, unfortunately, has not yet given to the public his unique knowledge of the subject.

[2] Letters 143 and 145.

from whom we derive our information about him flourished under the protective shelter of his rivals, the Palæologi. He suffers the disadvantage of the last members of an overthrown dynasty, for the nominal rule of his son hardly comes into our account. Furthermore, his failings—especially his nervous irritability—were such as to cause a sense of injury and soreness in the sensitive literary men who hoped much from him at the beginning of his reign and were disappointed. Not that such a disappointment was without some substantial basis. Theodore had ideas and a policy of his own, in his general government and in his church affairs, which, though perhaps not fundamentally different from his father's, were, from the first, clearly pronounced, and were bound to procure him enemies. Like some of his ancestors of the Comnenian house, he depressed the power of the hereditary magnates, and preferred men closely attached to his person, and united to him by friendship and by similarity of tastes. Especially he gave his full confidence to a man—probably a good deal younger than himself [1] —with whom he felt strong intellectual and religious sympathy—George Muzalon. And it may have been to counterbalance the influence of the nobles who had surrounded John Vatatzes [2] at Nicæa and Nymphæum that he sought out and promoted some members of the Lascarid family—his great-

[1] I judge this from the fact that in his letters Theodore sometimes calls Muzalon his *son*, though he is also addressed as *brother*. This is, of course, not inconsistent with their having been fellow-students, as Theodore's studies were prolonged beyond his early youth.

[2] For his choice of officials, and preference to merit rather than to birth, see Pachymerus, i. 13.

uncles—who had been of no account during the preceding reign.

It might have been supposed that his elder philosophic friends and preceptors, for whom he evidently cherished feelings of affection and respect to the end of his life, especially Blemmydas and Acropolita, would have drawn a more pleasing picture of their pupil. But with them also he came into collision, as we shall presently see, by his very independent ideas of Church policy. John Vatatzes had been careful to keep the upper hand in all ecclesiastical negotiations and decisions, but he had always been equally careful to work through ecclesiastics. Theodore was more of a theologian than his father; would probably have rejected the idea of religious compromise as similar to the concession of a boundary-fortress [1]; but perhaps for that very reason he had early made up his mind that in all matters concerning theology and Church organization, the Emperor must needs be the preponderant authority and must be recognized as such.[2]

The loneliness of Theodore's position made his course more arduous and troubled. He had no brothers or sisters, as an accident during horse exercise soon after his birth had incapacitated his mother from bearing any more children. He had, as we have already seen, been married young, and had apparently lived on affectionate terms with his wife.[3] But he was now, almost certainly, a

[1] See above, p. 167.

[2] Greg., ii. 7.

[3] Meliarakes' conjecture to the contrary (p. 483) seems to me quite unwarrantable. J. Pappadopoulus assigns to the period of his wife's death certain very despairing letters of Theodore

widower, and he resisted the persuasions of his friends to marry again. She had left him four children—three girls—the eldest of whom had been betrothed to Nicephorus of Epirus—and one infant son. His affections were naturally strong, and Muzalon, his brother by adoption, came to take the place that intimate adult relatives might have partially filled.

His want of sympathetic helpers, or rather the lack of sympathy in those to whom he naturally looked for help, was emphasized by his peculiar mental and physical constitution. In his early days [1] he worked out, probably under the eye of Blemmydas, all the possible combinations in human character due to the combinations of the three Platonic elements of the mind (the reasonable, combative, and appetitive) with the four humours

(Festa, 54, 58, 60, 61), and refers to, but does not quote, a lament written by him on her death. True, Helen is only personally known (so far as I can ascertain) to the historians as the child who was struck by her father for loving her Greek mother-in-law and fiancé better than her Bulgarian kinsfolk (as in the story told on page 152). But there is an ode by Blemmydas (published in Heisenberg's edition of his works, p. 110) on the birth of the ill-fated John Lascaris, son of Theodore and Helen. Here we have, from the hand of the pious Blemmydas, what we can scarcely regard as anything but a blasphemous comparison of the infant to Christ, of Theodore to God the Father, and of Helen to the Virgin. The quality attributed to Helen, which she is to pass on to her child, is *σωφροσύνη*. Of course we cannot gather very trustworthy character-sketches from complimentary verses of this kind, but perhaps Blemmydas would hardly have attributed to the lady a virtue in which her husband or the world found her lacking. I may add that the suggestions of J. Pappadopoulos as to the subsequent amatory experiences of Theodore seem little better substantiated.

[1] We have not the date of *De communione naturali*, but it was probably written in his student days.

of the body (blood, black bile, yellow bile and phlegm still familiar in mediæval times as the ground of the four temperaments), and he found the possible combinations — beside the normal one—to be ninety-two. If he subjected his own disposition to this analysis (as in all probability he did) he would have found that in himself there lay a good deal of the purely intellectual, with something of the combative, and that his temperament was partly melancholic and partly choleric. He cared most of all for study—for subtle tracing of the causes and combinations of things, and their expression in mathematical formulæ or in rhetorical niceties ; but when necessity demanded, he was ready to take up the task of a military organizer and leader. He was of an intensely sensitive nature, subject to seasons of deep depression and of uncontrolled irritability. This last characteristic was closely connected with, if not entirely due to, his physical disability. He was an epilept—not of the most pronounced type—for we do not hear much (till near the end) of violent seizures ; but the nervous derangement caused by the malady was always present, and took various forms—such as headache, prostration, pains in the arm—at different times. The illness was not serious enough to debar him from energetic participation in intellectual and even physical pursuits—thus we find he took great pleasure in hunting ; but it seems to have made him abnormally sensitive and sometimes unreasonable, with an over-development of self-consciousness, and some other traits of the chronic semi-invalid. Modern medical science would probably have reduced his sufferings and hindrances

to a minimum.[1] The doctors of his time made his unfortunate physique their happy hunting-ground.[2] He was able to criticize them (most educated men seem to have read Galen in those times), and in all probability he followed their counsels with many reservations. The chronic malady of Theodore may, of course, be exaggerated in an estimate of his character and career, but it certainly seems to explain some of the aberrations of an able and conscientious man.

A late contemporary of Theodore, the learned historian Pachymeres,[3] in considering Theodore's hereditary characteristics, finds in him more of the Lascaris family than of his father's. He did not inherit the prudence and firmness of Vatatzes, but he had the eager and combative qualities of his maternal grandfather, Theodore I., and the lavish generosity of his mother, Irene Lascaris, by whom, it will be remembered, his early education had been directed. His impulse was always to reward the services of those around him, from a distinguished military official to a chorister who had sung well in chapel. We find in his letters that when, in making military preparations, he is obliged to be frugal, and even to appear avaricious, he is going against the grain. Perhaps his love of distributing the imperial bounty went along with the defect of regarding the state—and indeed the church and the whole world—as centred in the imperial person. It is only fair to mention that the same historian

[1] It is notable that his worst outbreak of bad temper—the attack on Acropolita, to be mentioned later on—was after a very prolonged fast, such as a modern doctor would prohibit to an epileptic patient.

[2] Letter 70.

[3] i. 13.

who thus does justice to some of his merits has immediately before accused him of atrocious cruelty in punishing supposed machinations, by magical art, against his health. But the story (which will be considered hereafter) [1] does not wear the aspect of probability, and the imperial orders which may have served as a basis were possibly given when Theodore, in extreme illness, was scarcely *compos mentis*.

The first task of Theodore was to appoint a new patriarch, for Manuel had died shortly before John Vatatzes. Threatening movements on the Bulgarian frontier necessitated an expedition westward, and it was highly desirable that the coronation should take place first. Theodore accordingly came from Philadelphia, where he had been renewing his father's agreement with the Turks, and summoned a synod of the clergy at Nicæa, the members of which amounted to over forty. The result of the election is clear [2]; the motives and measures of the agents are diversely reported. It is evident that, as in the last election, a large party—perhaps the whole assembly—was strongly in favour of Blemmydas; that Theodore, from personal feelings of respect, would have liked to appoint his former tutor, but that, after some parley between Emperor and candidate, Blemmydas refused the honour; and that finally the choice fell on a worthy but not very distinguished monk, Arsenius of Apollonia,[3] who was not as yet in

[1] See below, p. 229.

[2] See Blem., "Dieg.," i. 43; Acrop., 111; Anon. (*apud* Sathas), 510 *seq.*; Greg., iii. 2.

[3] Blem., "Dieg.," i. 43, 44.

any clerical orders, so that he had hastily to be created in succession deacon, priest, and bishop. Blemmydas himself describes the transaction, in which he comes out in the light of a martyr, opposing a godless tyrant. The Emperor, he said, was most anxious to secure him as patriarch, but Blemmydas feared lest he might be led, if he accepted the office, to prefer, in difficult courses, the dictates of the Emperor to the indications of the Deity. Finally, after demanding a token from Heaven, on the promise of the Emperor to give him more power and glory than any patriarch had held before, Blemmydas signified his assent—provided that he should always put first the glory of God. To which the Emperor replied: "Never mind about the glory of God." Blemmydas made a fiery harangue, and his rejection, with the uncanonical choice of his rival, followed immediately, Arsenius having been promoted from layman to patriarch in three days.

It is, of course, impossible to take the story exactly as it stands. Theodore, a conscientious Christian, was not at all likely to make the speech attributed to him, though he may not improbably have uttered a testy word against the effusive and self-conscious piety of Blemmydas. Nor was Arsenius such an ignorant nullity as Acropolita, in his partisanship of Blemmydas, would lead us to suppose. One writer, who seems to have known him intimately,[1] speaks of him as of one who had acquired some

[1] The anonymous chronicler referred to above, and published in Sathas, "Mes. Bibl.," p. 548. He says that in the election, voices having been divided, the curious device was used of opening the Bible at random and taking a text to indicate the fitness of each candidate proposed.

learning, but was indifferent to worldly things. He had been associated with the bishops of Cyzicus and Sardis in the last negotiations of Vatatzes with Rome, a fact testifying to his reputation as theologian and diplomat, and after Theodore's death, as we shall see, he showed himself by no means wanting in strength of character. His spring from among the laity to the archbishop's throne was by no means unprecedented, though the choice of a layman courtier or diplomatist for patriarch had always been denounced by the clerical champions of the Byzantine Church. Vatatzes and Theodore were both, as we have seen, eager and generous friends of learning, but they preferred to have men of learning at the head of schools or in the peace of monastic libraries rather than in positions of ecclesiastical and consequently of political importance. And in this respect, as already suggested, Theodore went even further than his father.

In fact, one is tempted to think that probably Theodore had been not a little influenced in his ecclesiastical ideals by the theories of Frederick II. set forth in the last chapter. He desired, as Christian and as Roman Emperor, the recovery of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. But his experience of the late attempts to bring about an agreement had bred in him a profound distrust both of the papal propositions and of the steps towards compromise made by some of the Greek ecclesiastics.[1] In the doctrinal question he was probably at one with Blemmydas. In his treatise

[1] See especially Letter xviii. to Blemmydas, in which he finds fault with the Bishop of Sardis.

on the Procession of the Holy Ghost, written probably during the last years of his father's reign, he shows no disposition to compromise, though the formula which he adopts might seem to be a verbal concession.[1] But in the question of ecclesiastical authority, he shows, in the same work, a conception which differs *toto cœlo* from any to which Blemmydas might have given his assent. The question in dispute ought, he considered, to be settled in a General Council, and such council ought to be called and personally directed by the Emperor, the senators also being present. He regards the Emperor as the only man capable of giving valid decisions, being above the differences which encumber the rest, including the difference of language.[2] He carried his principle of imperial supremacy so far as to cause Arsenius to lay the dominions of Michael of Epirus under an interdict. This act was—rightly of course—denounced by Blemmydas, and it is notable that in this respect Theodore was able to acknowledge himself morally in the wrong, and that, on the remonstrance of his former preceptor, he caused the order to be rescinded.[3] Later on we find that Acropolita, passing through Berrœa, stopped and sent back some papal emissaries by the express command of the Emperor—and this he relates without remonstrance.[4] Such claims and

[1] τὸ Πνεῦμα χορηγεῖται διὰ τοῦ Υἱοῦ, but ἐκπορεύεται ἐκ τοῦ Πατρός.

[2] This suggests another question: could Theodore speak Latin? We have no evidence on the subject. He quotes St Augustine at least once, but not, I think, the Latin classics.

[3] It is difficult to see how an interdict could have been enforced in the territory of Michael Nothus.

[4] Acr., 67.

such acts as these would be worthy of an imitator of Frederick II., and there is good reason to think that Theodore had acquainted himself with Frederick's principles. He must have had a great deal of intercourse with distinguished persons in the West: the theological treatise already cited was addressed to the Bishop of Cotrone—the ancient Croton in South Italy. In one letter to Blemmydas [1] he expresses a fear lest philosophy might have deserted the Hellenes and taken refuge among the Barbarians. The mission of the Markgraf of Hohenburg,[2] the distinguished minister of Conrad IV., who knew all the ins and outs of papal and imperial diplomacy, had given him an opportunity of studying the Hohenstauffen policy. He must also have read and pondered the letters of Frederick to his father,[3] including the panegyric of the East, in its happy immunity from papal interference. The ex-empress Anna, Frederick's daughter, was still at court—perhaps retained as a hostage for Manfred's friendship or neutrality. And beyond all this, we have evidence of Theodore'e admiration for Frederick in a funeral oration composed in his honour.[4] True, there is exceedingly little about Frederick in this production, so little that it is only from the superscription that we can assign it to his memory. But the one idea in it—that great rulers, especially if they are intellectually in advance of their people, are bound to be censured and

[1] Letter 5. [2] See above, p. 178, and *cf.* Letter 124.

[3] See above, p. 173 *seq.*

[4] Published by J. Pappadopoulos at the end of his book on Theodore Lascaris. The reader must regret exceedingly that the style of his time proscribed anything like particularities or plain statements.

calumniated—is perhaps indicative of that feeling of sympathetic admiration for his great contemporary which was at least one of the factors in determining Theodore's policy in church and state.

We have lingered at the outset of Theodore's reign on his ideas and policy in church affairs, chiefly because his first act as Emperor proclaimed his ecclesiastical principles, and also because there were in his short reign no further ecclesiastical controversies or events of great importance, so that we shall not be obliged to return to the subject. We have now to take up the first military expedition of Theodore in the West.

The first danger was from Michael Asan of Bulgaria.[1] The other Michael,—Angelus (Nothus of Epirus), though not a very loyal ally, did not at once become an open enemy. The Bulgarian king had taken the opportunity of the change of emperors to attempt a reconquest of all the territory lately acquired by John Vatatzes. In the late autumn of 1254 he crossed Mount Hæmus and the river Hebrus, and in a short time had possessed himself of most of Achris and of the territory lying between Mount Rhodope and the Strymon, and even further west, with Tzepæna in the North. It is rather surprising to see what an easy prey these places became. They were inadequately garrisoned; one cannot but feel some suspicion of disloyalty in some of the military commandants, even among the "Romans." But the chief cause of Michael's success seems to have been the racial

[1] In the narrative of this war the best account to follow is that of Acropolita, who is well informed and graphic in details (59 *seq.*).

hatred of Bulgarians for Greeks. The same leading men among the Bulgarians who had helped Vatatzes were ready enough to return, if opportunity offered, to the championship of their own people. When Theodore learned the state of affairs, he summoned a council to consider what should be done. To this council he summoned, with the chief officials of his father's government, his personal and intimate friend George Muzalon, whom he created "Great Domestic," and his two great-uncles, Manuel and Michael Lascaris, who had remained altogether retired from public life during the reign of Vatatzes, and of little account during that of their brother, Theodore I. When opinions were compared, it was found that the general wish was for instant action, while the two great-uncles, considering the need of preparation, and possibly the undesirable time of year—for Theodore had been crowned on Christmas Day (1254)—were desirous of delay. But for once both the Emperor and Muzalon were on the side of the nobles. An army was quickly raised, and increased as it went on. It was led by Theodore in person, while the Great Domestic remained in charge of affairs in the East.

Having crossed the Hellespont, the imperial forces advanced rapidly to Adrianople, where they halted but for one day. A Bulgarian army under King Michael was near at hand, and the Greeks hoped to surprise it, but warning was given, and the Bulgarians withdrew, though some were overtaken and killed or captured. Theodore advanced further north and took Berrhœ,[1] the walls of which place had been demolished some time before by the

[1] Not to be confounded with Berrœa near Thessalonica.

Bulgarians, but hastily and partially rebuilt. Here he found abundant supplies, and rested for a time. He intended to proceed northward into the Hæmus region, but was hindered by snows and intense cold. The inhabitants of Berrhœ, with their cattle, were transported to Adrianople. The horrors of the midwinter migration are passed over lightly in the chronicles. Certainly humanity is not a feature of Theodore's wars. He spared neither his enemies—combatants and non-combatants—nor his own soldiers, nor yet—in justice be it said—did he spare himself. His idea seems to have been, by rapidity of movement and by creating desolation, to strike terror into the Bulgarians, that they might not so easily shift their allegiance in time to come. In the course of the winter months most of the towns of Rhodope Achridos [1] were recovered for the Empire.

With the opening of the spring of 1255 Theodore made preparations for a march on the important fortress of Tzepæna, in an angle of the Rhodope range. Two generals had been stationed in Serrhæ,[2] Alexius Strategopoulos and Constantine Tornicius. These received orders to come out and effect a junction with the main army. They endeavoured to do so, but were speedily discomfited by a Bulgarian attack—terrified, it was said, by the horn-blowing and shouting of a few shepherds and swineherds—and retreated to Serrhæ, whence they refused to resume the undertaking. Their disobedience was bitterly resented by the Emperor.[3]

[1] Peristytza, Stenimachus, Crytzimus.

[2] For position and importance of this place, see *Byz. Z.*, 1894.

[3] See Letter 204, which *ought* to be a very valuable source

But he soon had occasion to turn his attention another way. We have seen [1] how the city of Melenicus had been won over by Vatatzes chiefly with the help of the magnate Dragotas and by the demagogic arguments of his friends. Dragotas seems to have thought himself insufficiently rewarded for his action on that occasion. In his rebellion he was supported by some of his fellow-citizens and their neighbours, and was thus enabled to collect a force and lay siege to the city, the fortress of which was held by two Byzantine generals, Theodore Nestongus and John Angelus. News of their distress—more from want of water than of food—was brought to the Emperor at Adrianople. He proceeded at a rapid pace to Serrhæ; the recalcitrant commandants there were speedily degraded; but fate had better things in store for them both. Thence he struck north and forced the passage of the Strymon in a narrow defile at Rhopelium. The traitor Dragotas fell in a nocturnal attack, and Theodore was welcomed into the city. Having inflicted severe punishment on the delinquents, he went on to Thessalonica. He next undertook to recover and to make sure of some towns in the valley of the Bardarius,[2] but was for a short time hindered by sickness; not, apparently, his chronic complaint, but something of the nature of typhoid. On his return to Serrhæ, he received, it was said from Muzalon, the news that the Tartars had defeated the Turks, which, if true, would have

of information on this campaign, but is hopelessly obscure and corrupt. Tornicius (or Tornices) was of an aristocratic family of doubtful loyalty.

[1] See above, p. 184.

[2] Prilapus, Belesus, Strumnitza.

necessitated his return to Asia. It proved, however, to be false, and it would be natural to suspect that it had been fabricated with a view to checking his operations in the West. However this may be, Theodore determined to complete his work, in spite of the approach of the second winter since he had left home. Again he determined to try his fortunes against Tzepæna. Having encountered difficulties at the outset, he held a council of war. Most of the generals were in favour of returning to Adrianople and waiting for better weather. To which advice Theodore replied, "You have spoken well—but suppose that I, with the help of God, arrived at another decision, would you receive it as that of a wise ruler, concerned for your welfare?" They naturally answered that they would. Acropolita rightly regards Theodore's councils as futile, but he was only following in his father's steps, as in those of many successful autocrats, in frequently asking advice, but never taking it unless it agreed with his own notions. He then held a small inner council, some members of which proposed that they should go on to Stenymachus, a well-provisioned place on the way to Tzepæna, and thus in case of necessary retreat, they should not seem to the enemy to have gone back through faint-heartedness.[1] He accordingly sent on three officials to explore, and on their reply that the road was open, began to advance. But the ice and snow were too much for them. The retreat to Adrianople had to be made, after all, the Emperor himself being compelled for the first part of the journey to go on

[1] Apparently it would seem less like a flight, if they must retreat, to retreat from a post in which they felt no distress.

foot, since the horses were useless on the slippery ways. Theodore then returned to Asia, reaching Lampsacus for Christmas, and Nymphæum shortly after. He left his great-uncle, Manuel Lascaris, in command of his forces in the neighbourhood of Didymoteichus, along with Constantine Margarites, one of the officers who had advised the march on Tzepæna, and whom his aristocratic rivals accused of having been brought up on barley and bran and speaking with a bad accent. These two he honoured with official titles, and a considerable change in title and office was likewise effected at court.[1]

In the early spring of 1257 Theodore seems to have first turned his attention to affairs in the further East. He received an embassy from the Sultan of Iconium, who was in chronic dread of the Tartars. One of the chroniclers [2] tells how during a conference of Greeks and Turks, held in the open air, a dove pursued by a hawk took refuge by Theodore's chair, an omen turned by him to signify the protection which the Greek Empire was granting to the Seljukians against their terrible foes. A treaty was made, and Theodore set about preparations for another campaign in the West.

He seems to have been entirely determined not to be foiled this time by dearth of men or any other

[1] Thus :—

Manuel Lascaris	made Protosebastos.
Constantine Margarites	Megas Tzaousios.
George Muzalon	Protosebastos, Protovestiarios, Megas Stratopedarches.
Andronicus Muzalon	Megas Domesticos.
John Angelus	Protostrator.
Karmanites	Protovestiarites.

[2] Anon., *apud* Sathas, p. 522.

hindrances. No labour or money was spared to raise a sufficient army, even serving-men who attended to hunting and hawking being pressed into the service. Meantime bad news came from Europe. Theodore had given orders to the two generals left at Didymoteichos not to engage in battle against the enemy if the Bulgarians had secured the help of the Coumans (or Scyths). But they—in foolhardiness rather than disloyalty—had neglected these orders and marched out from their military quarters against a mixed host which was ravaging the country.[1] They had little chance against their lightly-equipped opponents. Manuel Lascaris, on his horse Goldenfoot,[2] escaped to Adrianople, but Margarites and many of the other officers were captured.

On hearing of these disasters, Theodore, having crossed the Hellespont, advanced with all possible speed[3] towards Didymoteichos, hoping to overtake the enemy—but, in Scythic fashion, it vanished before him. A certain number, however, of the Bulgarians or their allies were cut to pieces at Bizue—a place between Adrianople and the Black Sea.

One would have thought that this war might have dragged on endlessly, but Michael of Bulgaria seems to have realized that there would be no rest for him and his people until Theodore had re-

[1] Acropolita, 60 *seq.* But when he is criticizing anyone promoted by Theodore—especially such as the barley-fed Margarites—Acropolita had best be taken with a grain of salt.

[2] *χρυσοπόδης.*

[3] 400 *σταθμοὶ* in one day—according to Acropolita. This is, of course, absurd if *stathmos* stands for a day's journey. Can it be an equivalent of *Stadium*?

covered Tzepæna and re-established the imperial authority throughout the country south of Mount Hæmus. It is not impossible that some suggestion of a permanent diplomatic solution may have come from Theodore's side. In any case, the aspect of things was changed by the arrival of a new actor on the scenes—Urus the Russian, father-in-law of Michael Asan of Bulgaria. Urus, or Rotislav,[1] was a prince of royal blood, who held his chief title from a people over whom he had no power. His father, Wsewolowitch, had ruled in Kiev, but been driven away by a Mongol invasion. Bela IV. of Hungary befriended the refugees, gave to Rotislav his daughter Anna in marriage, and—after Rotislav had made a futile attempt to recover ground in Russia—made him *ban* over a district in what is now North Servia. Bela was a powerful and influential king, and his son-in-law seems to have counted for something. He gave his daughter in marriage to Michael Asan, and now he came forward to use his diplomatic talents on his son-in-law's behalf. The treaty was advantageous to the Greeks in that the much-coveted fortress of Tzepæna was ceded by the Bulgarian king, and Greeks and Bulgarians were to respect their former boundaries. Theodore rewarded Urus with rich presents and expressed his satisfaction in a proclamation to his people.[2] After magnifying the importance of what had been acquired, he remarked what a wonderful thing it

[1] See Gesler, *Geschichte von Ungarn*, i. 391. The identity of Urus and Rotislav has been disputed. Jireček ("Geschichte der Bulgaren," p. 266 and note) makes Urus the same as Stephen, King of Servia. But not only is he called Ῥῶσσος by Acropolita; in Theodore's proclamation he figures as ὁ τῶν Ῥώσων ἄρχων.

[2] Published by Festa in an Appendix to Theodore's letters.

was that a Bear had come to settle a fight in which a Dog and a Cub had been engaged, and had forced them both to disgorge their prey.[1]

Matters being thus satisfactorily settled on the Bulgarian side, Theodore turned his attention to Epirus. Michael Nothus had taken advantage of the imperial difficulties to extend his own sway, and seemed unwilling to carry out the proposed marriage between his son Nicephorus and Theodore's daughter Mary. Pressure was, however, brought to bear on him. Again Theodora, Michael's wife, came to the Emperor accompanied by her son, and having met him at a place called Lentza,[2] proceeded with him to Thessalonica, where the marriage was celebrated. By what appears a more-than-Greek trick, Theodore, having the two as temporary hostages, insisted that Michael should give up to him the important city of Dyrrachium, along with the fortress called Serbia, near the confines of Epirus and Bulgaria. But the course of affairs is obscure. For Acropolita, all that was then happening was overshrouded by a deep personal affront, which, though it need not loom so large in our pages as in his, is too significant of the characters and attitudes of the parties concerned to be entirely passed over.

While waiting to hear of the surrender of Tzepæna, Theodore received suggestions—from what quarters we know not—that the " Russian Bear " had been playing him false. It was the vigil of the Feast of the Transfiguration,and the Emperor's

[1] Here we seem to have an early, if not the first mention of the Russian Bear. The Dog must stand for the King of Bulgaria ; the Cub, which had run away, may be the house of the Comneni.

[2] This is only mentioned by Anon., *apud* Sathas.

temper had been irritated by a long fast. After a late dinner and a brief rest, he started out on horseback to make an inspection of the camp—"the city in transit, guardian of the other Roman cities," as he called it. Acropolita, the Grand Logothete, mounted on a mule, was ambling after him, and Theodore turned and requested him not to be left behind, but to follow at his leisure. He then propounded to those around him the suspicions he had received, and asked their opinion. All agreed that the suspicions must be false, a Christian prince would not thus perjure himself. This was not satisfactory to the Emperor. He repeated his inquiries, and turned to Acropolita to ask his private view. But Acropolita only uttered the equally futile remark that if Urus were a perjurer, the Divine vengeance would overtake him. Theodore, however, was bent on getting something more definite and pressed him further. Acropolita, with rather superfluous modesty, disclaimed the power of deciding on such difficult questions. Theodore, already sufficiently irritated, said that it was just in difficult things that counsel was wanted—any ass could decide about easy ones. "Then I belong to the asses," said the Logothete. "Yes, you always were a simpleton," was the reply. Acropolita had borne the epithet μῶρος from Theodore's mother, but he could not accept it with equanimity from Theodore himself. "If I am a simpleton, I had better not talk. I leave that to the wise." Theodore was now in a rage, and lost all self-control. He ordered that Acropolita should be dismounted and flogged. This was done; but Theodore seems to have immediately felt com-

punction and ordered Acropolita to be led away. For some days the Grand Logothete remained apart in his tent, declaring that he would never re-enter the imperial service. But on the occasion of the negotiations with Theodora of Epirus, Acropolita was persuaded, by the intervention of Manuel Lascaris and George Muzalon, to return to the imperial presence. The Emperor simply ordered him to go back to his accustomed place. He complied, and his disgrace was at an end.

However damaging to Theodore's character this story may be, the end of it is creditable to both parties. Acropolita had been aggravating and Theodore had been sorely tried. But there was nothing that could justify so terrible an affront offered to an old and respected if tiresome counsellor. But Theodore, like his father in the case of the Marchioness, and his mother after her outbreak against Acropolita himself, showed sufficient magnanimity to retrace his steps. And here the injured party accepted the tacit apology. Yet the fact that things of this kind could happen—that the dignity and the liberty of the highest official was not secure against the aberrations of the autocrat—helped to darken the last months of Theodore's reign, a reign which, had he died just after the surrender of Tzepæna and Dyrrachium, might seem to have attained the climax of success.

CHAPTER XII

FLIGHT AND ADVENTURES OF MICHAEL PALÆOLOGUS —FRESH TROUBLES FROM BULGARIA AND EPIRUS —LAST DAYS OF THEODORE II—ACCESSION OF JOHN IV—BRIEF REGENCY OF MUZALON—HIS DEATH—RISE TO POWER OF MICHAEL PALÆOLOGUS

THE last year of Theodore's reign was full of troubles. His position, among slippery allies and ministers of doubtful fidelity, required a cool head and a stern regard for justice, at a time when his disease was growing upon him, rendering him gloomy and incapable of self-control. It was while he was at Thessalonica, after celebrating the marriage of his daughter Mary to Nicephorus of Epirus, that he received alarming news from home. Michael Palæologus,[1] the Great Constable, had fled to the Turks. As Acropolita explained, when questioned, to the Emperor, Michael had repeatedly been threatened with blinding and other horrors at the hand of Theodore, and it might be supposed that he had only forsaken his post of duty because he had fears about his personal security. Michael had been left in charge of the military forces of Bithynia and Mesothynia—the region to the north of Nicæa, where some defence was still needed against the Latins of Constantinople. He is reported to have

[1] Pachym., iii. 1.

been moved by the warnings of a friend, and by the fact that an uncle of his, who bore the same name, had been taken into custody for saying that a man chosen to the imperial throne was not responsible for his election. Whether or no there were solid grounds for Michael's fears, it is impossible to say. Certainly, he now, as always, made the best of his position, and built bridges for a retreat. He issued loyal-sounding letters to all his subordinates, saying: "I, indeed, have private apprehensions from the Emperor's distrust, and am driven to flight to avoid personal calamity: but you must devote yourselves to the discreet and courageous discharge of the military duties incumbent upon you; the garrisons of towns and fortresses must be maintained, the security of the country must be cared for, and you must continue to act as you did when under my orders." These letters are said to have reassured Theodore, but he can hardly have felt quite satisfied.

Michael then withdrew eastward, carrying with him a large amount of baggage, which speedily fell into the hands of the Turcomans.[1] He escaped with difficulty, and made his way to the Sultan of Iconium. He was received with open arms, and his losses were speedily made up to him. The Sultan (Azeddin Kaikous II.) was hard pressed by the Tartars or Mongols (to whom he stood in the relation of a recalcitrant vassal) and glad of the chance of securing a capable military commander. Michael

[1] These are distinguished by Acropolita (65) from Tartars and Persians (=Seljukian Turks). They seem to have been akin by race to the Turks, and are sometimes found in antagonism to the Mongols, sometimes allied with them.

very characteristically hesitated to engage in warfare along with infidels, but was willing to lead those who held the Christian faith and to accept a Turkish title. The battle was fought at Tascara, on the confines of Armenia. Palæologus was successful, inflicting the death-wound on the leader of the enemy with his own hand. Subsequently, however, one of the Persian (Turkish) magnates went over to the Tartar side, and the tide of war turned against the Turkish Sultan and his Christian commander-in-chief. The Sultan became desperate, and inclined to sue humbly for Theodore's help.

On hearing this news from the East, Theodore determined to hasten thither himself. He left some forces behind on the European side, under his great-uncle, Michael Lascaris, and other generals, but as *Prætor* with command of the whole he appointed George Acropolita. It is quite possible, as that historian says, that he felt annoyed at the want of cheerfulness and freedom shown by Acropolita since his disgrace, and hoped that a long absence would wear away the memory of the wrongs inflicted. Theodore was assuredly not above feeling conscience-pricks. But certainly there is an element of generosity in the choice, for a position of trust and responsibility, of an old friend whom he had lately affronted.

Theodore accordingly crossed the Hellespont with the larger part of his army, and after the Christmas festival, advanced, at the beginning of 1258, to Sardis. There he received the Sultan of Iconium in person, the Greek army being encamped about Magnesia. The Sultan, practically a fugitive, only obtained a small force of chosen

men, and in exchange he gave up the city of Laodicea, and some other places. These places were not, however, held for long, but shortly after restored to the Turks.[1] There must have been a good deal of conversation between the potentates as to Michael Palæologus, the result of which has not come down to us. Michael had interested the Bishop of Iconium in his cause, and Theodore seems to have been anxious to have him to send into the West ; possibly, also, he felt nervous about the kind of power that Michael might acquire in the East. Accordingly Palæologus was restored to the position of Great Constable, on a stringent promise of fidelity to the Emperor and his dynasty. The Sultan did not obtain sufficient encouragement from the Emperor to undertake a vigorous resistance to the Tartars. He shortly afterwards signed a treaty with them, once more acknowledging their supremacy. It was probably soon after this that Theodore himself received an embassy from the Tartars,[2] and having, by sundry devices, endeavoured to impress upon them the dignity and strength of his Empire, made with them some kind of peace.[3]

In the West, meantime, George Acropolita was faithfully carrying on his master's work, and confirming his late acquisitions. Vatatzes and Theodore had accustomed their soldiery to midwinter

[1] Anon., *ap.* Sathas, p. 531.

[2] Pachym., ii. 24.

[3] The embassy of the Sultan is told by Anon., *ap.* Sathas, p. 530. Acropolita is no longer an eye-witness for what passed in Theodore's presence. For the relations of Greeks and Mongols, see D'Ohrsen, "Hist. des Mongols," vol. iii., p. 99. But the oriental sources give a notion of a state of dependence of the Sultan on the Khan, and the dates are discrepant.

marches in mountainous country—else it might have seemed a venturesome task on the part of Acropolita to make a tour of the Greek or "Roman" cities of Bulgaria and Albania from December 1257 to February 1258. He started from Thessalonica for Berrhœa, whence, as already related, he dismissed the papal emissaries who had come for the purpose of discussing ecclesiastical reunion.[1] Thence he struck south-west, passing by the newly-acquired town of Servia, and proceeded through the passes of the Albanian mountains to Dyrrhachium. The famous seaport is connected, as already remarked,[2] with so many great conflicts of history. Now it was the western outpost of the Nicene Empire, and necessarily a thorn in the side of the despots of Epirus. Acropolita made expeditions to make sure of the country round, and then turned east and took up his quarters for a time at Prilapus, in the district of Southern Bulgaria called Pelagonia.[3]

But Acropolita was not able to enjoy for long the peaceful satisfaction of an accomplished task. News came that a powerful magnate in those parts, Constantine Chabaron, had been induced by a sister-in-law of Michael the Despot to rise in revolt. This lady must have been of the Petraliphas family —a sister of Saint Theodora, possessing her persuasive arts without her Christian principles. Acropolita sent to Michael Lascaris and the other commander, Scuterius Xyleas, to meet him in

[1] See above, p. 209.

[2] See pp. 29, 92.

[3] The places he gives in his route are: Thessalonica, Servia, Castoria, Achris (not, of course, to be confounded with Rhodope Achridos), Albanum, Dyrrhachium, Chunabia (a district), Mount Kake Petra, the River Mates, Derbe, Cytzabis, Prilapus.

Pelagonia and consider what should be done. They decided to mass their forces in Pelagonia, and dispersed in order to collect them. But meantime the Despot Michael declared his hostility openly. The hardest post was that of Acropolita, being nearest to the despot. He succeeded in relieving a high official, Nestongus, whom he had sent to Albanum, a place which proved to be full of conspirators. After various efforts, Acropolita found himself closely besieged in Prilapus. The other generals seem to have had difficulty in maintaining their ground in the neighbourhood of Thessalonica. Berrhœa was captured for Michael Nothus.

But help was at hand. We have already seen that the Emperor had resolved on sending his ablest general, Michael Palæologus, to revive his cause in the West. Michael arrived safely in Thessalonica, joined Michael Lascaris, and obtained some advantages. Acropolita was relieved in Prilapus, but ordered to continue in command there. A battle was fought near Bodena, the Epirot forces being led by Michael's illegitimate son, Theodore. The imperial forces were victorious, Palæologus having unhorsed Theodore, who was despatched by a Turk, his rank not being recognized. Michael had brought some Paphlagonians, who had served under him in the East, and the fact that this Turk was among them seems to show that he had overcome his scruples against mixing the blood of Christians and Mussulmen—this time in war against Christians. But the progress that Palæologus might have made was cut short, though he reached Dyrrhachium successfully. The Despot

Michael had probably been watching his opportunity for some time and had obtained the alliance of the Servians. It was not very hard for him to isolate the imperial fortresses by occupying the mountain passes. Acropolita surrendered on the promise of being allowed to retreat to Thessalonica. He was, however, kept a prisoner—at first in severe, later in easier, captivity. Xyleas and other commanders came to terms with the despot. Meantime Michael Palæologus was summoned back to Theodore's court.

The whole story of Palæologus has become obscured by the legendary accretions which commonly affix themselves to the early misfortunes of a subsequently fortunate person.[1] We are told how the Emperor, conceiving fresh suspicions of him, sent a certain Chadenus to arrest him; how Palæologus sought advice and encouragement by oracular utterances said to proceed from an unknown voice in a church; how omens were also derived from the songs with which the travellers —Chadenus and Palæologus—beguiled their way. The case is obscure, since it must surely have been to the interest of Theodore's dynastic plans that Michael should not be near at hand in the event of his death. One cannot but suspect that Michael himself had some control over the course of events. Otherwise we might naturally suppose that Palæologus would have found it more profitable to avoid Theodore's emissaries, to gain military prestige in the West, by means of a favourable agreement—after chastisement—with Michael of Epirus, to play upon the jealousy of Western and

[1] These stories are given by Pachymeres, i. 9-12.

Eastern Greeks, and finally to recover Constantinople on his own account and thence obtain the Empire of Nicæa while it suffered under a moribund sovereign or an unpopular regent. That he did not attempt these things could certainly be due neither to loyalty nor to want of resolution on his part. From the point of view of expediency, circumstances may have justified his present action and his desire to appear as a loyal champion of the Nicene power till he could acquire the command of it for himself, and regain the ancient seat of Empire for the strongest of its claimants.

Michael accordingly was willing, after a brief imprisonment, to take fresh oaths of fidelity to Theodore and his son, and to forget all private wrongs. Among these were certain severe and cruel punishments—or torture-tests—inflicted on a niece and sister of his, accused of magical machinations against the Emperor's health.[1] Even allowing for much exaggeration, we must perceive that the concluding months of Theodore's reign were stained with many acts of tyranny. How far Theodore himself, or the Muzalons, or the circumstances of the State are to be held responsible, it is difficult to judge. But our view of the whole case is modified by the fact that though disloyalty was made more prevalent by severe measures, the disloyalty was there already. Thus among those who had com-

[1] According to Pachymeres, Theodora, the niece of Palæologus, was tested by being put into a bag with some cats. She had, by the Emperor's order, been forced to change a beloved for an unloved bridegroom, and her marriage had not prospered. Other accused persons purged themselves by the hot-iron ordeal. It would seem that with primitive and barbarous accusations, a barbarous and even savage procedure was not objected to.

plaints of maiming and deprivation were the recalcitrant generals who had declined to obey the Emperor's orders in Bulgaria; also one Philes, whom Theodore had for many years found a perpetual hinderer in his way.

Before we come to the last scenes of Theodore's life we may notice what had taken place in Bulgaria after his arrangement with Michael Asen and Urus the Russian. Michael Asen was, not long after that event, murdered at Tirnovo, and succeeded by a cousin, Callimanus II.,[1] several citizens being implicated. The Russian Urus, father-in-law of Michael Asen, made an expedition into Bulgaria, to rescue his daughter, who had been compelled to marry her husband's murderer. Callimanus became a fugitive, and soon after lost his life. The chief men of the Bulgarians—possibly under the influence of Urus—met and elected as king a certain Constantine, son of Toichos or Tech. He was of distinguished birth, but not of blood royal, and the hereditary principle was sufficiently established in Bulgaria to make it expedient for him to seek a daughter of Theodore Lascaris and Helen of Bulgaria in marriage. The request was granted, in spite of the fact that Constantine was already married. By a curious arrangement—perhaps in order to show that he meant business—he sent his wife to the Nicene court, and received the Princess Irene in her place.[2] A treaty was accordingly made between Theodore and the Bulgarians, which the troubled state of Macedon

[1] See Genealogical Tree in Jireček, "Geschichte der Bulgaren," p. 268; Acr., 161, 2. Pachymeres tells the story differently.

[2] See Frontispiece.

CONSTANTINE TOICHOS OF BULGARIA

HUSBAND OF IRENE LASCARIS

From a fresco in the Church of Boyana, near Sofia

and Thrace must have rendered all the more desirable.

This was possibly the last diplomatic act of Theodore's reign. The interest of the story now centres round his deathbed. He made his will, consigning all the affairs of the Empire, with the care of his young son John, to George Muzalon.[1] This might well appear an act of presumptuous despotism, even for a Byzantine Emperor, but he tried to confirm it and to give it a show of legality, by securing its confirmation on the part of all the magnates within reach. Meantime he prepared for the end. Like other monarchs[2] at the point of death he desired to put on the monastic habit. He first made his confession to the Bishop of Mytilene, sent to him by the patriarch at his special desire, a confession "fitting a noble and generous soul," according to those present. To be more sure of absolution, he desired the patriarch to prepare a written document certifying the remission of his sins. Arsenius consented to this. One friend of his earlier days, Blemmydas, unaccommodating as ever, refused. It is not according to the style of Blemmydas to state clearly what the points were on which Theodore failed to give satisfaction, the interdict in Epirus, his late ebullitions of rage, or any neglect of duty. Certainly Theodore died penitent—it was characteristic of his family to recognize when they were in the wrong—and it

[1] Gregoras says that the Patriarch Arsenius was associated in the charge. Possibly he was to have the special care of the child-emperor.

[2] *E.g.* Hugh Capet of France. A curious notion that Theodore turned monk and actually lived as one for some time is perpetuated in the title given to his treatise, cited above, "De processione S.S."

does not need much imagination to conceive how painfully he must have realized his late aberrations from the principles he had always been asserting in religion and morals. No further explanation seems necessary for his strong expressions of self-abasement.[1]

His death took place in August 1258, after a reign of three years and three-quarters. He was buried by his father in the monastery of Sosandra, and even before the funeral ceremonies were accomplished, it became evident that his last dispositions with the oaths taken to maintain them were of no avail against the tumult of reactionary forces which now came into play.

We have seen how Theodore had made enemies of some of the magnates, including several who had held office under his father, by advancing new men, personal friends of his own, to fill their places. Of late he had caused yet more disaffection among the nobility by his severe punishment of their actual or suspected misdoings. Again, in spite of his energetic military effort, he had not been uniformly successful, and just now the regions of Macedon acquired by his father's prowess were in the hands of the formidable Epirot rival. There could surely in the strained and agitated condition of public feeling have been no worse policy, at that moment,

[1] According to Acropolita and Anon., *apud* Sathas (whom here probably Acropolita is copying, instead of *vice versa*), he kept repeating τὸ "Ἐγκατέλιπόν σε, Χριστέ." The article would make one suspect the repetition of some formula or hymn (as we might say *the* Te Deum or Miserere), though I have not found any such. The suggestion of Sathas that Theodore's Hellenism had involved repudiation of Christianity seems very remote.

than to appoint as guardian of Emperor and Empire a man hated by all the nobility and without the military prestige that might have gained for him the confidence of the people and army. Meantime there was a rival in the field closely akin to the imperial family, and to all the great families of Byzantium, renowned for military skill shown in many fields, and accomplished in acquiring the good opinion of soldiers, clergy, and the people generally.

Muzalon was not unaware of the difficulties of his position. Very soon after the Emperor's death, he called a council, at which many of the disaffected were present, to deliberate about the state of affairs. He made them an elaborate harangue,[1] chiefly as an apology for his own action and attitude. Those present, however, taking their cue from Michael Palæologus, repelled any suggestion of dissatisfaction, and confirmed Muzalon in his office. He accordingly set unsuspiciously to work to complete the arrangements necessary at the beginning of a new reign. The little prince, John Lascaris, was placed in a castle in Magnesia, under custody of a guard.

But Michael Palæologus was using his opportunity. It is impossible not to regard him as the secret machinator of the conspiracy, though he seems to have succeeded in keeping his name and personal activity in the background. So far as we can discern from the accounts that have come down to

[1] Pachymeres gives it at great length. We can hardly suppose he had a verbatim report. But he seems to have been intimately acquainted with the events of his troubled time. Acropolita was, of course, out of the way.

us, the movement against the Regency was more of the character of a coalition in the aristocracy combined with a mutiny in the army—especially among the foreign mercenaries—than a genuine popular rising. But the grievances of the discontented parties had to be focussed to a point, and the people—or rather the rabble of two cities [1] —to be wound up to a state of savage animosity. This seems to have been done partly by donatives, partly by suggestions of mischievous acts on the part of the Protovestiarius—such as that he had prevented a donative from being given to the army ; that he had used magic against Theodore, or that he had designs on the life of the child John. Michael Palæologus had great power over the soldiery, especially the Italian auxiliaries, and he also had opportunities of gauging the mind of the Tornicii, the Strategopouloi, and the other aggrieved magnates.

The crisis came nine days after the death of the Emperor. A solemn service was being held in the church of Sosandra. Several distinguished men were present, besides ladies of the court and the officiating clergy. Outside, the soldiers were assembled, and mutters of discontent arose, which became louder and wilder. A shout was raised that the little Emperor should be produced. The guards complied, and the child was ordered by them to hold up his hand. This was meant by them as a sign to command order and quiet, but it was interpreted by the more violent of the rebel leaders as a signal to authorize their action. A rush was made towards the church. Muzalon and his

[1] Nymphæum and Magnesia.

brother had warning, but their want of precaution seemed afterwards like that of men whose destruction has been determined by Heaven. The crowd of soldiers and rabble approached, and the psalmody was rudely stopped. Attempts were made at parleying, but they came to nothing. A secretary of George Muzalon, who somewhat resembled him in appearance, especially at a moment when all were dressed in black, was mistaken for his master and killed on the spot. The clergy and many of the congregation fled. The Muzalon brothers tried to hide, one under the altar, the other behind a door, but were dragged out and slaughtered with the utmost barbarity. The discoverer of George Muzalon's refuge was one Charles (Karoulos), whose name indicates his Western origin.. It seemed as if no respect remained for law or religion. When the wife of George Muzalon, herself a Palæologus, and niece to Michael, came clamouring for her husband, she was ordered by the Great Constable himself to hold her tongue, lest she should suffer a like fate.

This last incident would suggest that Michael Palæologus was himself in the church all through the disturbance, or at least that he was near at hand. He certainly was not the man to lose the golden opportunity now within his reach. But it seemed more expedient for him to refrain from assuming control of the state without further sanction. For as the body of Muzalon had been hewn in pieces by his enemies, so the guardianship of his imperial ward was the object of a harpy-like attack on the part of the numerous noblemen who could urge the claims of affinity or of authority. Michael

acted warily in securing at least the temporary alliance of the one person who had the unfortunate boy's interest at heart—the Patriarch Arsenius. It is probable that Arsenius, hurriedly fetched from Nicæa, thought that the protectorate of one—even if that one were Michael—was likely to work less evil to John than would a prolonged struggle. Accordingly he used his advice to secure to Michael the custody of the Emperor and the title of Grand Duke (μέγας δοὺξ), along with the command of the imperial treasury.

But events abroad as well as at home were such as to call to mind the ancient cry of "Woe to the nation whose King is a child." Michael, the Despot of Epirus, was stirring again. He had—as we shall see in the next chapter—formed or joined a coalition which was likely to deprive the Nicene Empire of all its European possessions. Nor was there, as yet, much unity at home. To aspire to imperial dignity seemed, in itself, inconsistent with the oaths which Michael had more than once sworn to the Lascarid dynasty. For a time he was willing to be content with a less magnificent title, and to accept, on the desire of the Senate, by the authority of the boy-emperor and the patriarch, the title of *Despot*. Arsenius was only half-hearted in the matter, but Palæologus disarmed his suspicions by promising to submit everything to his wishes, and by signs of deference—such as leading the patriarch's mule as he rode to the synod. Michael strengthened himself by conferring office on his own brothers, men of standing and ability, and by making alliances with the nobles, as well as by a judicious use of the money at his disposal.

From Grand Constable to Guardian and Grand Duke, from Grand Duke to Despot were steps that seemed natural and comparatively easy—though contrivance and hidden machinations were necessary in each case. The next step was bound to come; Michael's position, now that he had so much actual authority, needed confirmation by the prestige that belonged only to the imperial name. But if he were crowned colleague of the young John—whose coronation had not yet taken place—it was hardly to be expected that he would stop short at that point, and not further aspire to become sole Emperor and founder of a dynasty. The fear that this would happen was a perpetual torture to the Patriarch Arsenius.[1] He considered, however, perhaps rightly, that a break with the rising power would precipitate the dangers he sought to avert, and that the best course he could pursue was to give the sanction of the Church to Michael's successive elevations, but to bind him by the most solemn promises to respect the rights of his young colleague. If, as one account says, Michael received the imperial dignity on condition of giving it up when John came of age, the patriarch clearly overshot the mark, since any such promise was evidently futile. There is no doubt, however, that Michael did bind himself by stringent oaths. The Senate, including the higher clergy, proclaimed him Emperor, and he was raised aloft on a shield. Oaths were imposed on all subjects in the name of the jointly ruling Augusti.

The next event in the establishment of Michael's supremacy was the coronation at Nicæa. Michael

[1] The anxiety of Arsenius for the rights and the safety of the boy John are brought out by Nic. Gregoras, iv. 1.

called at Nymphæum—or Magnesia [1]—to fetch John Lascaris for his part in the ceremony. This part, in the eyes of the patriarch, and of any who still held to Theodore's arrangements, was the leading one. There must be a double coronation, but John, as legitimate and permanent sovereign, ought to be crowned first. But instead, Michael Palæologus presented himself. Arsenius demurred, and some of the bishops—especially Manuel Psaras of Thessalonica—protested. But again Arsenius thought it most expedient to give way. Soldiers, many of them "Barbarians," were ready, if provoked, to renew the scenes of Sosandra. The child himself was made to declare that he would rather not be crowned if only they would keep him safe. Michael alone received the imperial diadem. In the procession, which was afterwards formed, he and his wife led the way. John Lascaris walked behind, wearing a chaplet of gold and pearls. In a few days, Michael returned to Nymphæum, taking the boy with him, having again promised the patriarch to fulfil his duties as guardian.

It would seem to have been an unwise policy on the part of Michael not to make at least some appearance of acting justly and generously by his charge. But he was now too secure in his position to dread any resistance on the part of Arsenius or the other friends of Theodore. It is difficult to account for the general want of gratitude that we should have expected to find towards the memory of John Vatatzes and Theodore Lascaris, especially as both had had many friends bound to them by ties not

[1] It is not quite clear in which of these places the young Emperor was made to reside.

GATEWAY IN NICÆA

BYZANTINE COLUMN IN MAGNESIA

only of obligation but of sympathy. But, as we have seen, a good many of the clergy were out of agreement with the independent ecclesiastical policy of Theodore II. And Michael had on his side both the treasure accumulated by his predecessors and the armies they had trained, together with the additional forces—Celts, Latins, Asiatics—who were specially devoted to himself. Henceforth he is sole ruler. His colleague ceased to be mentioned in public prayers and acclamations, and was never seen in public.

The remarkable baseness of Palæologus in his conduct to the son of his rival, his perfidy and unscrupulous treachery in working his way to the goal, are likely to blind us to some of the worthier features in his character. He was, after all, no vulgar usurper. In his rivalry with the Lascarids, he has at least the excuse of having been provoked by deeds of harshness and injustice, even though he was incapable of appreciating their readiness to repent and forgive. It was by his own valour and by the qualities which make a general popular that he acquired his power over the soldiers. Theodore could raise armies and wage successful war, but his demands on officers and private soldiers were such as to tax the loyalty of any human being. Michael could make his men really attached to his person. He was of noble birth—in fact, if primogeniture had been a recognized institution in the Empire, a good deal might have been made of the fact that his grandmother was an elder [1] sister of the daughter of Alexius III., who was married to

[1] I do not find that Michael himself or many of the early writers lay much stress on this, though Gregoras emphasizes it.

Theodore Lascaris I.[1] He used money to gain his ends, but was not personally avaricious or luxurious. In his dealings with foreign powers he upheld, as we shall see, the credit of the Empire. He was a man of iron will and deep dissimulation, and it was by virtue of his mental and moral concentration on his desired end that he obtained what he sought. In his autobiography, written in later life, he uses curious expressions about his elevation, which may be due to consummate hypocrisy or to a Napoleonic belief in his star. " On the departure of the Emperor Theodore . . . I (for who, O Lord, shall recount the magnitude of Thy wonders ?) was raised by Thee to be Emperor over Thy people." [2] The " wonders " remain such to us, but apparently did not seem inexplicable to his contemporaries.

[1] See Genealogical Tree.

[2] Troitsky, " Imp. Michaelis De Vita Sua," quoted by Meliarakes, p. 544. As this work is in Russian, it is inaccessible to me. Its genuineness is disputed by some.

CHAPTER XIII

MICHAEL VIII. (PALÆOLOGUS)—EPIROT WAR—RECOVERY OF CONSTANTINOPLE

IN tracing the steps by which Michael Palæologus rose to sole possession of imperial authority in the East, we have somewhat anticipated the course of events. It has been noticed, however, that his successive elevations were promoted if not actually accomplished by the action of foes at a distance. Furthermore, we may here say that—paradoxical as it may sound—the perfidious and brutal setting-aside of the Lascarid heir prevented—in all probability—the loss of the one object to which the Lascarids had devoted their lives—the restoration of the Empire in exile at Nicæa and Nymphæum to the Queen City, and the recovery of the Byzantine See and Santa Sophia by the Œcumenical Patriarch. We have seen the discomfiture abroad and the discontent at home which marked the last months of Theodore's reign, and which a divided regency, or even a strong regency which was not to be permanent, could hardly have overcome. Of course we can imagine that if Michael had had the magnanimity to accept the regency in loyalty, or even to agree to the wretched compromise suggested by Arsenius—imperial authority for a dozen years—he might still have accomplished a good deal. But to complete the task in contemplation he needed

unbounded power of civil and military appointments, command over the treasury, and full discretion in the management of the army. Though we necessarily regard Michael as succeeding to the power and policy of the Lascarids, we must note that he went further than they did in raising an army from all quarters. Of course we have met with contingents of various peoples serving under Theodore I., Vatatzes, and Theodore II., though the latter seems generally to have preferred a Hellenic army.[1] But Michael, in his varied career, had commanded Turks and Latins as well as Greeks and Slavs, and his military policy was justified in its results, even if a more national force might have been a surer stand-by for the Empire in days to come.

Looking back on events, it must seem to us exceedingly probable that if the Nicene Empire had, even for a brief space of time, sunk into comparative inanition, the Latin dominion would equally soon have come to an end, but it would have made way for the rival Greek dynasty, that of Epirus. Michael II. was, as we have seen, an able man, in diplomacy as in war, and now he put forth his strongest efforts to assert his supremacy in the long contested lands of Thrace and Northern Greece. He made two marriage alliances with the two princes of his time best qualified to assist in his projects, giving his daughter Helen to King Manfred of Sicily and her sister Anna to William of Villehardouin, Prince of Achæa.

[1] This is the theory of John Papadopoulos, in the study of Theodore already referred to. I cannot see that it is very securely based, though we have noticed the charge made against Theodore that he refused a donative to the mercenaries.

Manfred was now at the height of his power. His brother, the Emperor (in name only) Conrad IV., had died in 1254, leaving an infant son, who is commonly known by his Italian name of Conradino. After the brief and unsuccessful regency of Berthold of Hohenburg (former ambassador to Theodore II.) Manfred assumed the regency in Italy. In spite of some difficulties, he obtained recognition from Pope Innocent IV., though that Pope had certainly no intention of giving up papal claims over the Sicilies. The same year Innocent died, and was succeeded by Alexander IV., who pursued the policy of his predecessors against the Hohenstauffen, and invited rivals—first Edmund of England and later Charles of Anjou—to ascend the Sicilian throne. Manfred, however, had up to this time more than held his own, and though there were fluctuations of fortune, Ghibelline power revived not only in Sicily proper but in Southern and Central Italy. In 1258 there came to him a false report of the death of his nephew Conradino, and he was solemnly crowned king at Palermo. He naturally did not resign the crown when the falsity of the rumour was proved. A grown man was needed in Sicily as at Nicæa, and happily for Manfred, Conradino was at a distance, and there was no need for foul play in the maintenance of his own supreme authority. Under his rule, the Sicilian kingdom was efficiently governed, and it seemed as if he had succeeded to the power of Frederick in his best days. It was within a year of his coronation that his marriage with Helen of Epirus brought more claims, or strengthened a power already exercised,[1]

[1] There is an important document, quoted by Meliarakes,

on the eastern side of the Adriatic. The dowry of Helen included an important piece of coast opposite to Corcyra—according to some accounts, also Corcyra itself, and the island is certainly found under a lieutenant of Manfred's soon after this time—comprising the towns of Belgrado, Valona (or Aulon), and the islands of Sybotæ, possibly also Dyrrhachium to the north. It seems surprising that Michael II. should have consented to so large a cession. But apart from the fact that in all probability Manfred already possessed it, and the marriage treaty only recognized an accomplished fact, Michael may have hoped that when, by the aid of his powerful son-in-law, he had ousted both Greeks and Latins from Thrace, and obtained the imperial throne in Constantinople, Manfred might prove a useful vassal ally in the most westerly regions of the Empire.

Michael's other son-in-law was a notable man, who had extended and strengthened his inherited dominions and resources. William de Villehardouin had been born in Greece, and—though of course a Roman Catholic in religion—might seem, especially when he had a Greek wife, qualified for the task of blending the peoples of Greece together and making them a prosperous nation. He had conquered the important coast towns of Monembasia, with the adjoining territory, and had tried to assert

p. 517, published in the "Acta and Diplomata" of Miklosich and Müller relating to a private grant of land. It is dated Feb. 28, 1258, and mentions specially that this was the first year of Manfred's lordship over Dyrrhachium, Belegrado, Aulon, and Sphenaritza (Spinna), with outlying districts. There seems, however, some ambiguity as to the date, as Conrad II. (Conradino) had been king of Sicily for *eight* years. This would point to 1262.

his superiority over the Lords of Athens and other vassals in Greece of the Empire of Roumania. His assistance given to St Louis and his adventure in Rhodes have already been noticed.[1] He had an efficient feudal army which would be of great service to the despot of Epirus. The position and character of Villehardouin—his ambition, his statesmanship, and his Greek alliances—remind us somewhat of Boniface of Montferrat and Thessalonica, in the early days after the Latin conquest of Constantinople. But, like Boniface, he was hindered by ill-fortune from maturing his plans. Anna of Epirus brought with her as dowry the country about Demetrias in Thessaly.[2]

Michael Palæologus was not eager to make head at once against the Franco-Greek coalition in the West. He sent as ambassador to Michael of Epirus[3] that Theodore Philes who had been hated and blinded by Theodore Lascaris. But Michael of Epirus, confident in his new allies, rejected the terms proposed. Palæologus also sent ambassadors to Manfred and to Villehardouin, hoping to withdraw them from the Epirot alliance, but without success. The Bulgarians did not, apparently, join the Epirot confederacy. The Queen, Irene,[4] elder sister of the unfortunate John Lascaris, urged King Constantine to attack the territories under the rule of Palæologus, but apparently the kingdom had been a good deal weakened lately, and very little opposi-

[1] See above, p. 176. [2] Hopf, "Griechenland."

[3] Acropolita, 83 *seq.* Here again we have an instance of the puzzling fact, constantly recurring in Byzantine history, that judicially-inflicted blindness was not always a disqualification for political office.

[4] Pachym., ii. 26.

tion to the Nicene Emperor was encountered from that quarter.

Michael Palæologus had also some negotiations with Baldwin of Constantinople, who sent ambassadors to propose terms of peace. Here he adopted an uncompromising attitude. This seems to show his confidence that the city must fall before long into his hands. Baldwin's ambassadors proposed first that Michael should cede Thessalonica. He refused, saying that he regarded Thessalonica as his home, since his father had held it for some time and had died and been buried there. The next suggestion was that he should give up Serrhæ. Certainly not, was the answer: that place was the scene of John Vatatzes' conquests and of Michael's own military beginnings. Boleros, then. No, it was his favourite hunting ground. What, then, would he yield? Nothing at all, was his blunt reply. If the Latins wished for peace with him, they might have it on condition of paying tribute for Constantinople. The story has a bombastic ring, and Acropolita, who relates it, was still out of the way. But it marks the fact that whatever alliances might be made among Greeks, Franks, and Asiatics, no permanent peace between the empires of Nicæa and of Roumania was possible.

Meantime Michael Palæologus sent his brother John—whom he had made Sebastocrator—against Michael of Epirus, with experienced subordinates and a considerable mixed force. The Epirot army was in the neighbourhood of Castoria. John Palæologus advanced north by the pass of Bodena. The Epirots seem not to have expected him so soon, for many withdrew hastily, including the

despot's brother-in-law, Theodore Petraliphus. In a short time, the imperial forces had occupied Achris (the seat of the old Bulgarian bishopric), Deabolis, Prespa, and Pelagonia. The despot withdrew beyond the Albanian mountains and sent to his sons-in-law for aid.

Both Manfred and Villehardouin were ready to help him. Manfred sent a small but efficient cavalry force.[1] To oppose the combined host of Greeks, Frenchmen, and Italians, John Palæologus marshalled his army of Greeks, Turks, Coumans, and other auxiliaries. The decisive battle was fought in the plain of Pelagonia, near to Castoria. The details are given with great variety, but the result is clear. Palæologus was victorious, Michael II. fled, the forces of Manfred were overcome and for the most part captured. The Prince of Achæa was discovered hiding in a heap of hay and carried off to the Emperor Michael in Nicæa. He remained four years in prison, though it is said that he might have been liberated if he would have recognized imperial claims over the Morea.

The cause of the defeat seems to have been the sudden withdrawal of the despot himself, leaving his allies in the lurch. According to one account,[2] John Palæologus, the Greek leader, sent a messenger to his camp to warn him that Manfred and William were both negotiating with the enemy. But

[1] Four hundred according to Acropolita, three thousand according to Pachymeres. Gregoras makes Manfred come in person, but this is evidently a mistake. These discrepancies are by no means the only ones, even in the Greek accounts. The "Livre de la Conquête" (ed. Buchon) is divergent from all, and hopelessly confused as to names.

[2] That of Gregoras, iii. 5.

Michael Nothus, though not remarkable for fidelity, showed, on most occasions, more courage than to run away on the eve of a battle and more shrewdness [1] than to be so easily deceived by a lying message from the hostile camp. It seems more probable that the other story is correct, which makes the illegitimate son of Michael—John—the immediate cause of his father's discomfiture.[2] John had, we are told, a beautiful wife, a Thessalian lady, and was jealous of the admiration she excited. He was also incensed by the scornful words of Villehardouin, who reproached him with his base birth. More probably he viewed the alliance of his family with the Frank princes as dangerous to the independence of Epirus. He still had sufficient regard for his father and brother to stipulate that their lives should be spared. In any case, he continued for a time in the army of John Palæologus.

The victory of Castoria was, according to Acropolita, one of those of which the sun looks on but few. To him, as we shall see, it brought liberty and renewed activity, and, apart from all its issues, it was a remarkable spectacle—the well-armed cavalry of the West put to flight by the Bithynian horsemen and the light-armed troops from the further East—perhaps it was the first time that Turks fought against Greeks on Greek soil, and on this occasion in Greek service. But it is the larger

[1] Perhaps, however, he had shown some credulity on a former occasion, when he let his wife and son fall into the power of his rival. See above, p. 219.

[2] Pach., i. 30, 31. Acropolita says that John surrendered to the Greeks, and makes his subsequent return to his father the beginning of Michael's recovery.

result of the battle that entitles it to rank as a decisive one in the history of Western Europe. For had it gone otherwise, we can hardly doubt—as lately suggested—that Michael of Epirus, not Michael of Nicæa, would have recovered Constantinople for the Greek Empire. Again, the rising power of the Villehardouin princes had been permanently crippled. Neither Epirus nor Achæa had been crushed, but both had received a stout blow, and lost a great opportunity of advancement. The troops sent by Manfred had not been sufficiently numerous for him to feel their loss seriously, but the break-up of the coalition, in which he might have become a prominent member, marks at least one step in the decline of his fortunes in Sicily, and the rise of his rival, Charles of Anjou.

Meantime, while John Palæologus went southward, his colleague, Alexius Strategopoulos, pressed on over the mountains called Pyrenees which separated Old from New Epirus, invaded the heart of Michael's kingdom and obtained his capital of Arta. Here he found and liberated the historian Acropolita, whose long confinement had not weakened his bias against the rulers of the Epirot Despotate. He repaired to the camp of the Sebastocrator, and returned, as soon as he could, to the East, where he seems at once to have resumed the office of Grand Logothete under Michael Palæologus.

The Sebastocrator John endeavoured to pursue his victorious career in the central regions of Greece. He marched south to Lebadea and captured Thebes. But now the tide turned in favour of Michael Nothus. He had fled to the Island of Leucas, and had looked for help from Italy. According to a Venetian

writer,[1] he went himself to Italy, but this is very improbable. Meantime his illegitimate son John left the Greek army and joined his father and brother. The people of Epirus were now as ever as disaffected to the Greeks of the East as to the Franks themselves. Joannina, which was being besieged, was relieved, Greek garrisons were expelled from the Epirot towns, and the country was recovered for Michael Nothus and Nicephorus. They did not, of course, recover the debatable ground they had lately lost, but the despotat escaped extinction and seemed in a fair way to recover its past prosperity. Alexius Strategopoulos was taken prisoner in a battle at Tricurophis (the ancient Tricca, in Thessaly), but was shortly afterwards liberated.

We seem to require some explanation of these sudden changes of the fortunes of war, but it is not of much use to speculate on the secret machinations of Michael Nothus, his family and allies. Acropolita accuses the Greek generals of inefficiency. Alexius Strategopoulos had played an ambiguous part once before, under Theodore Lascaris,[2] but he had acquired and seems to have retained the confidence of Michael Palæologus. John the Sebastocrator seems to have been a little over-eager to return to the East and enjoy the honours bestowed upon him—especially the title of *despot*, in token that he had fought against a despot and prevailed, while his brother Constantine was made Sebastocrator, with the right to wear scarlet slippers with golden

[1] Marino Saluto Torselli. Hopf and other historians think that it was Nicephorus who went, in the course of the next year, and that he obtained fresh succour from Manfred.

[2] See above, p. 213.

eagles, and Constantine Tornicius received the same title with right to the same slippers minus the golden eagles. The Emperor Michael was binding all the higher nobility to himself by honours and marriage-alliances. Probably he realized that any decisive war with Epirus must be of long duration, and that what had been done already was sufficient to prevent Michael Nothus from becoming for some time a formidable rival in the race for Constantinople.

It was towards Constantinople that Palæologus kept his eyes turned. The Emperor of Roumania was in a wretched plight for want of men and funds. Now that the most precious relics had been sold, the churches were despoiled of their ornaments and even of their tiles to contribute some small amount to the exhausted treasury. At last Baldwin was reduced to pawning his only son, by consigning him to the charge of his Venetian creditors. The defences of the city were, however, sufficiently strong for Michael to require some external help or some assurance from within before he made a regular attack. He had hopes from the treacherous offers of a Frank nobleman, whom we may perhaps identify with Anseau de Cahieu.[1] He seemed to have been in some way won over by the Greeks during the time that he was a prisoner in their hands. He promised to open a gate to them

[1] Acropolita calls him *Asel*, and says that he was cousin to Michael. Anseau had (as shown above, p. 118) married a daughter of Theodore Lascaris I.; her mother was a daughter of Alexius III. and sister to Michael's grandmother. The whole case were more probable if this were even the son of the original Anseau de Cahieu. There was another Anseau, surnamed de Touci, who was taken prisoner in the Epirot war, who was not apparently any relation to Palæologus.

since he was on friendly terms with the keeper of the keys. At the critical moment, however, he was either unable or unwilling to fulfil his promise. All that the Greek army could do was to attack, without effect, the old fortification of Galata.[1] Next spring Palæologus renewed his efforts and gained the city of Selymbria, not far to the west of Constantinople. This success was of importance not only in giving him a foothold near the city, but also because of its effect on the relations existing between the people within Constantinople and those of the country round. The land to the west of the Golden Gate had come into the possession of a number of very independent Greek freeholders, whose labours in great part supplied the city with provisions. Though inclined to sympathize with the Greeks, they had generally felt it expedient to remain on good terms with the Latins. Now, however, that the garrison in Selymbria cut many of them off from free communication with Constantinople, they were ready to act on the side of Palæologus. Though called *voluntaries*,[2] from the fact that their adhesion to either side was due to choice rather than compulsion, they became useful and faithful supporters of the national cause. A truce for one year was concluded between Michael and Baldwin.

A curious episode is recorded of the stay of Michael at Selymbria. A band of Greeks penetrated into a

[1] To be distinguished from the present one. See above, p. 45. Meliarakes makes the expedition described by Acropolita different from that found in Pachymeres, but it seems more rational to suppose that they are both referring to the same series of events.

[2] *θελη*ματάριοι. Pachymeres gives the above explanation. Finlay takes the term as equivalent to military volunteers, depending on themselves for defence.

monastery in the suburb of Constantinople called Hebdomon, and found there, in a corner, the upright form of a naked, well-shaped figure, long dead but not decayed, with a shepherd's pipe in the mouth. An inscription near led them to identify the corpse as that of Basil the Bulgarian-slayer. It was decently wrapped in silk and brought to Selymbria, where, by order of the Emperor, it was interred with religious solemnity in the Monastery of the Saviour. Perhaps Michael was not unwilling to revive the memory of the triumph of his great predecessor over the Bulgarian people. Acropolita had been sent soon after his liberation on a mission to the court at Tirnovo, where he spent the Christmas of 1260 and the Epiphany of 1261. The particulars of the negotiation have not been related. They seem to have brought about no amelioration in the prospects of the Bulgarian queen's young brother.

Meantime, while Michael kept his chief attention directed towards the recovery of Constantinople, there were other things with which he had to concern himself. He received at his court a good many fugitive Turks, including the Sultan of Iconium himself, and his family, who were sent after him. Michael treated them with great courtesy, and held out hopes of helping them against the Tartars when his own affairs should allow him leisure and means for such an undertaking. At the same time, he was anxious to find some kind of *modus vivendi* with the dangerous Tartar power, and the refugees, some of whom had been his comrades in the days of his exile, might be treated as valuable cards in his hand. But while the far East as well as the West presented difficulties, he had also to face opposition

in his own capital. The Patriarch Arsenius, with Manuel, Bishop of Thessalonica, and Andronicus of Sardis, continued to regard Michael as little better than a usurper, and as deeply dyed in perjury. To save themselves from consent to acts which they disapproved, all three sought to embrace a monastic life. Manuel and Andronicus accomplished this end, though not without opposition. Michael refused to give Andronicus permission to go into his native place, Paphlagonia, where it was said he intended to hatch plots against the government. Arsenius had a kind of popular demonstration on the occasion of his leaving Nicæa for the monastery of Paschasius, at some little distance. The Emperor sent messengers to draw from him an account of his motives. This Arsenius refused to give, but he was ready to resign his office. A synod of clergy was held, and Nicephorus, Bishop of Ephesus, was appointed to the vacant See. But in one year Nicephorus died. Constantine Tornicius, who was on friendly terms with Arsenius, came to the imperial court, and persuaded the Emperor that it would be a good thing to restore him. It would seem that the respect in which Arsenius was held became the more manifest during his absence, and Michael saw the advantage to be gained from his sanction and support. The conditions on which he resumed his office are not known. Michael was probably ready, now as before, to swear to an agreement which might last as long as he found it convenient.

Meantime another ally was engaged on the Greek side. For a long time, war had been raging between Venice and Genoa. The Venetians had been the mainstay of the Latin emperors. It was a most

important achievement on the part of Palæologus to secure the alliance and the active help of Genoa for the Greeks. A treaty between Michael and the Republic was drawn up in the spring of 1261, and has come down to us.[1] Trade privileges were granted to the Genoese in all places under the sway of Palæologus, similar to those which they had enjoyed under Manuel Comnenus. The city of Smyrna was put into their possession.[2] The Emperor was not to make any treaty with Venice unless the Genoese consented. In return, the Genoese were to give him naval assistance against his enemies.

With the "voluntaries" and the Genoese to help him, his ecclesiastical opponents reduced to silence, his dangerous neighbours in the East held in check, and with increased land forces, both native and foreign, at his command, Michael might seem ready to strike the final blow and to make for the goal which he, as his Lascarid predecessors, had ever kept in view. But the year of truce was not yet expired, and for that reason, and probably others, it might seem desirable to move in a circuitous way. And fortune favoured him, though how far the result was due to fortune and how far to skilful prearrangement it is not easy to say.

The forces that accomplished the decisive act were small, though their number may have been

[1] It is published in various forms, and is most accessible in the "Recueil des Chartes" at the end of Buchon's edition of Du Canoye's "Histoire de Constantinople."

[2] This seems an extraordinary concession on the part of Michael, and shows the great importance he attached to the Genoese alliance. The best built part of the fortifications of Smyrna is commonly regarded as Genoese work.

minimized by those who desired afterwards to lay stress on the great results often achieved by Providence with slight means.[1] There had been fresh stir in Bulgaria and probably in Epirus, and Michael decided to send Alexius Strategopoulos, who now bore the title of Cæsar, to put down any hostile movements against his subjects in the West. He had under him a small band of Bithynian bowmen and a certain number of Coumans and other auxiliaries.[2] On the way he was, according to instructions, to pass near the walls of Constantinople, not with a view to direct attack, but in order to inspire a wholesome fear, and, most probably, to wait on events. When he arrived at Rhegium, between Selymbria and Constantinople, he received an urgent request from the voluntaries to avail himself of a great opportunity. A young Venetian—a podesta, the Greeks said—Marco Grandenigo, had been in negotiation with the Greek governor of Daphnusia, an island or promonotory on the Black Sea near the mouth of the Bosporus, and had held out hopes that if he were well supported from Constantinople, he would be able to secure the place for the Latin Empire. It seems strange that Baldwin should have acceded so readily to the design, without suspecting either the natural desire of a Venetian to obtain what might prove a very desirable vantage-point in the war

[1] The story is somewhat differently related by Acropolita, Gregoras, and Pachymeres, but each has peculiar points which do not contradict the other and which seem probable. Acropolita was the best informed, but his account is brief. The Western authorities are not very clear.

[2] Finlay points to the high praise with which the archers of Bithynia are mentioned, as proof of the prosperity of the lower agricultural population under the Nicene rule.

with the Genoese, or any deeper machinations in connivance with the Nicene power. But his desperate position probably made him ready to catch at straws. A considerable force of Latins was embarked for Daphnusia, and at the moment when Strategopoulos arrived before the walls the defences of the city were even weaker than usual.

Although Strategopoulos had received [open] directions not to make any military attack, he was soon persuaded by the able leader of the Voluntaries —Cutrizaces by name—to avail himself of so good a chance. Some Greeks outside the walls had friends within, and there was a monastery dedicated to the Virgin, near the Gate of the Fountain, which had a subterraneous passage under the fortifications.[1] Through this passage, at dead of night, a body of armed men found their way into the city. The Gate of the Fountain and the Golden Gate were opened from inside—and through them, and over the walls by scaling ladders, the Greek army passed in.[2] No resistance was as yet made. Many of the inhabitants were glad to see them, and joined in the shout: "Long life to the Emperors, Michael and John!"

Baldwin retreated to his palace and thence made his way to the sea, where he found a boat on which he escaped to Eubœa. The recovery of the City was made on 25 July, 1261, after fifty-seven years of alien domination.

But the deed can hardly have been regarded as complete while the Latin host which had gone

[1] Of course this does not sound a very probable story, and it is not given by all the historians, and is given with variations by those who have it.

[2] Here Pachymeres and the other authorities all differ.

against Daphnusia might be immediately expected. That expedition had proved futile and was on its return, when its leaders received news of what had occurred. The Greek captains were equal to the emergency, and rendered the return of the army impossible by setting fire in four places to the houses near the seashore. A manful attack was made, but it was ineffectual. The Venetian and other merchants found that the only feasible course was to save such of their possessions as they could and sail away.

It must have been hard for all parties to realize the magnitude of the event, which seemed rather the result of an impromptu attempt than the consummation of a policy of fifty years. Michael, at least, preferred to regard it as a sudden and unexpected occurrence. He was staying at Meteoron,[1] and was asleep when the news came. His sister, Irene, or Eulogia,[2] came to his bedside, shook him lightly, and said, "Up, Emperor, you have got Constantinople." As he hardly seemed to take in what she was saying, even after she had repeated the words more than once, she called out in a louder voice: "Up, Emperor, Christ has given you Constantinople." Whereupon he rose, saying, "I believe what you say now, Sister; what you said at first, I could not receive." He waited till morning dawned, and the preparations were made for his advance towards Constantinople. At Achyraum the imperial insignia of Baldwin were brought to him. They seem

[1] Probably in the country between the Hermus and the Caicus. See Ramsay, "Hist. G. A. M.," p. 131, and maps.

[2] Eulogia was her name by religion. It seems rather unlikely that a professed nun should be about the Palace. Perhaps she took the veil later.

not to have been the old ornaments worn by the Comneni, but (in part at least) others manufactured for the Latin princes. On August 4th the city was reached. Acropolita was in Michael's company, and in the absence of Blemmydas, whose liturgical skill would have been in request on such an occasion, was requested to draw up suitable forms of thanksgiving to be used on the occasion of the solemn entry. Acropolita undertook to do his best, and devoted a day and a night [1] to the composition of thirteen suitable prayers, so that we may feel assured that the Almighty was thanked in correct and eloquent phrases for the triumph granted to His humble but faithful servant, Michael Palæologus.

The procession into and through the city must have been an imposing sight. Michael, who was accompanied by his wife and eldest son, was followed by his army and by the Senate, which included the higher clergy. The Patriarch Arsenius was not there, but the Bishop of Cyzicus read from the top of one of the towers of the Golden Gate some of the prayers composed for the occasion, and the people below joined in the *Kyrie*. As Pisistratus on his return to Athens had been escorted by a human likeness of Athena, so Michael had borne before him a sacred picture of the Virgin, said to be from the hand of St Luke. This he deposited in the Monastery of the Studium, which he passed on his way from the Golden Gate, through which he had entered, to the Church of the Divine Wisdom, now at last restored to the Orthodox Church. In this

[1] Or perhaps two nights and a day, since Acropolita set to work directly after his interview with the Emperor, and continued it for a day and a night.

church a little later a yet more solemn ceremony took place, when Arsenius had arrived and consented to perform once more the act of coronation. It is needless to say that John Lascaris had no part in the triumph, but had been left behind in Asia Minor.[1] So little was he thought of now that Acropolita, in an oration before the Emperor, ventured to suggest that Michael might associate his son Andronicus with him in the government. It seems strange that an honourable man like Acropolita should not have realized the further depths of perjury into which the already perjured Michael would have plunged by such a deed. However, the Emperor seemed not to take the point of the oration, and nothing was done for the time.

We may, however, add a few words more as to the fate of the miserable John Lascaris. At the age of ten Michael caused him to be blinded. In spite of this a conspiracy was aroused in his name,[2] centring round a pretender, but it was soon put down. Pachymeres mentions John as still in prison twenty-five years later, but there is at least a hope that a less melancholy fate was in store for him. In the archives of the Angevin kings of Sicily, in Trani, under the year 1273, we have a letter from Charles of Anjou, to welcome Lascaris on his escape from the

[1] Another person of imperial race of whom we hear nothing at this juncture is Anna, the widow of John Vatatzes. She had lived an exemplary life, and soon after this suffered from the solicitations of Michael Palæologus, who wanted to marry her and to divorce his wife for that purpose. She was ultimately restored to her brother Manfred in exchange for Strategopoulos, taken prisoner in a new war against Epirus. For her later fortunes, see work of Schlumberger, referred to on p. 168.

[2] Finlay points out that the Lascarids were popular among the people of Asia Minor, though naturally the reverse in Byzantium.

jaws of Palæologus to the Sicilian kingdom. This may have been John, or it may have been the Pretender, but the former alternative does not seem the less probable.

The Empire was now no longer in exile, but it was sorely crippled. Epirus, which, from a Panhellenic point of view (not held by many, since the death of Michael Acominatus [1]) ought to have formed part of the orthodox triumph over papal "barbarians," was fairly vigorous but always unfriendly. Achæa seemed likely to return to unity with the Empire, since William Villehardouin was only released after concessions and promises. But these promises were speedily broken. The rulers of Epirus and of Achæa looked for alliances in Italy, and the strife of Eastern and Western Greeks was continued in the rivalry of the Angevins and the descendants of the Hohenstauffen for the possession of Italy and Sicily.

The task of maintaining the Empire with foes to east and west (for the Ottoman Turks were shortly to rise on the ruins of the Seljukian Empire) would perhaps have proved a task beyond the strength of the Lascarids, as it was ultimately found to be beyond that of the Palæologi. Yet it was a gain for civilization, that for some time longer, even in an impoverished and weakened condition, a Greek people, with something at least of the culture and traditions of the old Hellenism, held the Queen City on the Bosporus. The reason for regarding this as profitable for civilization may become clearer if we look a little more into the character of that culture and consider the extent to which Greek

[1] See above, p. 124, and below, p. 276.

traditions, both pagan and Christian, had been preserved during the fifty-seven years of waiting.

Note on the Coinage of the Lascarids

The coins of the Nicene Empire have always been very difficult to identify, owing to their similarity in types, proper names, etc., with those of Epirus and Trebizond. The task, attempted by Sabatier, has been lately more effectively accomplished by Mr Wroth of the British Museum, whose lamented death has followed closely on the publication of his book ("Catalogue of Coins of Nicæa," *loc. cit.*, 1910). It is to be noticed that we have gold *nomismata* of the Nicene emperors, none of that metal which can be safely attributed to Epirus or Trebizond. The emperors occasionally put a part of their surname (*Lascaris* or *Ducas*) on their coins, which help in their identification. As to their titles, it is curious to notice that they generally call themselves *despotes*. Both Theodore I. and John Vatatzes seem also to use the title *porphyrogenitus*, to which, in its original sense, neither of them had the slightest claim, whereas Theodore II., whose birth nearly coincided with his father's accession, never employs it. The type is generally of the Virgin or a warrior saint crowning or supporting the Emperor. On Theodore II.'s coins we have St Tryphon, whose wonder-working powers he mentions in two of his letters (199 and 217 ; Festa). Also there is the seated Christ, holding a book. Some of these have the appearance of being copied from icons. A good many of the coins attributed to Vatatzes seem to confirm the statement of Pachymeres that he adulterated the coinage. His types, however, are better than those of his predecessor and follower.

CHAPTER XIV

LITERATURE AND ART UNDER THE LASCARIDS

IT might seem to the casual reader that any historian of the Lascarid dynasty would find it an easy task, after tracing their military and political vicissitudes, from the fall of Constantinople to its glorious recovery, to summarize the results of their rule, and to indicate the chief influences of the period, in relation to manners, thought and culture, primarily in the East, and indirectly through the whole European system. For, as we have abundantly seen, not only were the Lascarid emperors themselves eminently representative of the best culture of their times, but the records of their reigns have mainly been derived from writers who realized in a very high degree the moral and intellectual side of public and private life, to whom the retention and handing on of ancient wisdom seemed at least as important as the maintenance of trade routes and fortifications, who regarded literary eminence as a qualification essential for posts of dignity in the church and desirable in the state. Yet the student who has, so to speak, walked hand-in-hand with students like Blemmydas, the Acominati, and Acropolita, through some of the most stirring scenes of the history of their times, must feel disappointed at having gained from them so little information as to the condition, mental as well as physical, of the

people among whom they lived. And the paucity of legislative or diplomatic records belonging to this time, with the wholesale destruction brought upon the country soon afterwards, in raids of Turks and Tartars, has prevented us from supplementing our literary sources from those of a monumental character.

The care shown by the Lascarids, most particularly by John Vatatzes, for the general public welfare, has been sufficiently emphasized in the preceding narrative. We cannot, however, point to any measures of administrative reform affecting the condition of the people. These emperors had to carry on the centralized administrative system characteristic of Byzantium. They had troubles with the great families, such as had thwarted the policy of the earlier Comneni, and the irregular revolution which led to the setting up of Michael Palæologus seems to have been an aristocratic reaction combined with a military mutiny and an appeal to the mob. But, generally speaking, where their power was well established, the autocratic government of the Lascarids had not left much scope for local magnates. Their theory, as we have seen, was of imperialism *Dei gratia*, and this idea was carried to the highest possible point by Theodore Lascaris II., in spite of the fact that his own generals would not obey his orders, and that the force of circumstances necessitated his retaining in his service the deadly foe of his house. Whether, like the Isaurian emperors and the Comneni, the Lascarids endeavoured to improve the conditions of the agricultural peasantry, and whether they had regard to the interests of the craftsmen in the towns, it is impossible to say, though the general prosperity

which they sought to increase would suggest that in these as in other matters they followed the best traditions of their predecessors.

In regions which would seem more open to our investigation—those of literature and education—we are met by a curious fact—answerable for much that is anomalous in the history of the later Greek literature—the fact that the common tongue of the people was not recognized as a literary language at all. Men of culture would never have thought of writing in it. Preachers eschewed it in their sermons. It had no place in the service-books of the Church, and even the use of it for popularizing the stories of the saints was discouraged by ecclesiastical authorities. The further question suggests itself: In what language did the literary people talk? It seems most probable that they understood the common conversation of the people, unless it were the local dialect of a region to which they did not belong, and professors and schoolmasters sometimes had a severe task in keeping their pupils from making use of words or forms which were condemned as vulgar.[1] To the ordinary student of Greek literature the fact makes little difference, except that if writers never wrote as they spoke, they were, in books and letters, always walking on stilts. But

[1] See the correspondence of Michael Acominatus with George Bardanes (Sp. L.: Michael Acominatus, vol. ii., p. 289, etc., and App. On the unintelligibility of Michael's first sermon to the Athenians, and his disgust at their ignorance, see vol. i., p. 124). There is a very interesting discussion of the growth of popular Greek in Krumbacher, p. 787 *seq.* He warns us against the notion that mediæval Greek was the same as the κοινή, the discovery of which has of late thrown so much light on the New Testament.

certainly the literature on which they were nourished, and which they endeavoured to copy, was that of the Greek Classics and Fathers, and written in the language that all educated men had at least learned at school. Yet if we wish to know on what mental food, both secular and religious, the common people were brought up, we are proposing a question which has not yet received any sufficient answer.

Of one thing, however, we may be certain: that among the people of Asia Minor and of Thrace, who owned the sway of the Lascarids, there were germs of a literature destined hereafter to bear fruit, though not of the kind to be anticipated from its seeds. To put the matter more plainly: for many centuries the process had been going on by which the deeds of heroes and of saints had been collected into the material for a national epos and a national hagiography. Songs sung or stories related by soldiers around their camp fires, or by peasants sitting under their fruit trees in the rich Bithynian and Ionian valleys, came to constitute a loosely connected body of tradition which was not put into form until the task was undertaken by men of some classical culture, so that the final product, though essentially popular, was not entirely in the language of the common people. The proof of the long period of incubation is found in the curious juxtaposition, in the written epics, of personages belonging to various historical periods, and in the varieties of form among the various versions which have survived.[1] Thus, to take one instance, the popular

[1] Those who do not read Greek may get some notion of the character of the medieval Greek epic from the translations—into French and English respectively—of Emile Legrand and

legend of Belisarius, general of Justinian, besides presenting accretions of historical and non-historical events,[1] includes the names of some great Byzantine families that did not flourish till centuries after his death, and possibly associates with him one of the generals who achieved the reconquest of Constantinople in 1261. We have already seen[2] that the myth-making faculties of the people busied themselves early with the exploits of John Vatatzes, and connected with his name some doings that belonged to others. It would be interesting to know whether Theodore I.—an excellent subject, one would think, for an epic poem—ever received any popular recognition. In the absence of other than fragmentary knowledge we may assert that few if any popular tales or songs were brought into literary form and given to the world during the Lascarid period, but that during that time material was being accumulated for the epic literature that afterwards counted as a cherished possession of the Greek Empire in its last days, and even in the times of dispersion and subjection which followed.

We have already observed the eagerness with which the later Byzantines clung to the words and grammatical forms of classical times. But they could not be altogether successful. One of their chief hindrances in this respect was that their pronunciation—though how far it approximated to

W. Wagner. See also the Romanes Lecture for 1911 by Prof. J. B. Bury. The action and reaction of Western and Eastern Romance is an interesting subject, which belongs to the period succeeding that with which we are concerned.

[1] The whole has been submitted to a searching investigation by Prof. Heisenberg, "Beilage zur algemeinen Zeitung," Munich, Nov. 1911.

[2] See above, p. 195.

modern Greek is a vexed question—had certainly become very different from that of the ancients. Certainly some sounds which had required different symbols were now indistinguishable. Differences in quantity had, at least to a considerable extent, ceased to be noticed, so that though the learned might continue to use the old measures—to write in hexameters, iambics, and the old lyric metres—they were probably following ancient rules, without regard to euphony. When they consulted their ears, they laid stress, as does the modern Greek, on accent. For centuries church hymnody had neglected quantity and followed elaborate systems of accentuation. The popular poetry was more uniform as to number of syllables than as to accents. When *popular* poetry or popular metres are mentioned, it is not implied that it was confined to illiterate people or to merely colloquial language. Blemmydas, with all his fastidiousness, and other versifiers of our period, sometimes deigned to exchange their halting hexameters and iambics for " political " verse, or that form which ultimately ousted all the rest, and dominates all the ballad poetry of medieval and modern Greece. But it is superfluous to say that these learned men, even when they regard accent rather than quantity, adhere in general to the vocabulary and to the accidence and syntax of our Greek dictionaries and grammars.

The origin of the " political " verse is still matter of dispute. Its structure may be briefly explained. It consisted of fifteen syllables to the line, and was mostly iambic, the last syllable being short. Thus it resembles the ballad metre of Teutonic languages, it is practically the metre of " Chevy Chase " and of

"The Babes in the Wood" with one short syllable added, though originally it was unrhymed. A good many of our nursery rhymes would come under it, with slight additions of syllables.[1] There is a certain monotony about it, especially when, in the epics, it is prolonged over many hundreds of lines, but the rhythmic effect is pleasing, and, when rhymed, it must have been extremely easy to commit to memory. One short piece of "political" verse, more popular in style than anything by Blemmydas, is that by Nicolas Irenicus on the occasion of the second marriage of John Vatatzes.[2]

Leaving on one side the germs and the scattered fragments of popular literature, in the hope that they may yet be rescued by the hands of Middle-Greek scholars, and put in their right place in the history of Hellenic literature, we now turn to notice a few of the most conspicuous figures in the learned and literary circles of our period, with most of whom we have already made acquaintance.

The period just preceding and immediately following the fall of Constantinople and the rise of Theodore Lascaris I. is illustrated by the works of two distinguished pairs of brothers, both of which have already come under our notice, the Mesaritæ and the Acominati.[3] In the works and lives of these

[1] Thus:

"The King was in his counting-house [a'] counting out his money;
The Queen was in her parlour [she was] eating bread and honey."

[2] See above, p. 169.

[3] See above, pp. 100 and 169; also Heisenberg, *loc. cit.*, and the editions of Michael Acominatus by Sp. Lambros; also the

scholars we find, along with much that is artificial and rhetorical, many vivid touches of the troubled times in which they lived; and we follow, with sympathy, their efforts to stem the tide of "barbarism" both in the world around and in the state of general culture. In both cases, too, we have pleasing cases of fraternal affection, since Nicolas Mesarites wrote a very interesting biography of his brother John, Nicetas Acominatus commemorated in his history the valiant deeds of his brother Michael in defence of the Athenians against the "tyrant" Sgouros, and Michael in turn wrote a panegyric of Nicetas on the occasion of his death.

To speak briefly first of the former pair, whose very existence has only within the last few years come to light[1]: John and Nicolas Mesarites were the sons of an official (Πρωτασεκρῆτις and Προκαθήμενος τῆς συγκλήτου) of the Byzantine court, and were born in the sixties of the twelfth century. John was brought up with the intention of his following his father's profession, an idea temporarily hindered by a futile attempt on his own part, when he was seventeen years old, to break loose from Constantinople and make a pilgrimage in the East. He held some office about court under Andronicus Comnenus, and on the death of that Emperor, retired into a monastery. He was subsequently made a professor by Alexis III. and commissioned to write a commentary on the Psalms, but his book perished in

interesting account of him, with translations of his Works, by Elissen. *Cf.* Gregorius, "Geschichte der Stadt Athen während des Mittelalters."

[1] Works of Heisenberg, *loc. cit.* We only know of John from his brother's biography, unless the "Complaints of the Clergy" could be shown to be his work (see above, p. 110).

the fires in Constantinople in 1204. Like Nicetas Acominatus,[1] he succeeded, in the horrors of the Latin entry, in bringing his family (*i.e.* his mother and brother: he had probably taken a vow of celibacy) into a place of safety. He took a leading part in the resistance of the Greek monks to the papal claims in 1204 and in the disputations with Cardinal Benedict in 1206. He died in the course of the following year. His brother Nicolas had likewise been a court official, and as exercising a kind of curatorship over some ecclesiastical treasures, was intimately acquainted with ecclesiastical Constantinople. We have from his hand a description of the mosaics of the Church of the Holy Apostles, and also a very vivid account of a conspiracy which occurred in the year 1201, when a certain John Comnenus (the Fat) possessed himself for a few hours of the imperial throne, and all the energy and the persuasive efforts of Mesarites were needed to keep the mob from rifling the Court Church.[2] Mesarites stood on the same side as his brother in opposition to the Latin claims, and wrote loyal letters to the Nicene court at the time when monks and clergy were generally trying to find a workable compromise between two allegiances. After his brother's death, he came to Nicæa, to be present at the consecration of Autoreanus as patriarch, and a letter which he wrote[3] to his fellow-monks in Byzantium describes

[1] See above, p. 69.

[2] Among the holy relics were the Crown of Thorns (afterwards sold by the Latins to St Louis), the nails, lance, scourge and reed sceptre, and also the purple robe belonging to the Passion of Christ.

[3] Described by Professor Heisenberg, *loc. cit.*, but not yet published.

his adventures by the way and his kindly reception. He was made *refendarius* at Nicæa, and subsequently Bishop of Ephesus. Afterwards, as we have seen, he took a leading part in the negotiations between the Nicene Church court and Innocent III., on the occasion of the mission of Cardinal Pelagius (1213), and his account of the affair is our chief authority for those events. Besides other writings, he left a treatise on Church poetry.

The Mesaritæ, though doubtless important men in their day, were not great literary figures, though Nicolas had considerable power of narration and apparently a good stock of erudition. But it is well that their memory should have been revived, in that they seem to represent in a favourable light the tone and character of the official and ecclesiastical circle of their times. Both were men of strong patriotic feeling, whose patriotism involved loyalty to the Lascarid house on the one hand and tenacity for the rights and the integrity of the Greek Church on the other. Both seem to have united zeal for learning with a high standard of practical duty. Both had warm affections for kinsfolk and friends. True, in the case of Nicolas at least, self-esteem was not behind esteem for others, but there are few Greeks, either in classical or in later times, without any touch of vanity, and the Mesaritæ strike us as essentially Greek.

Far more illustrious was the contemporary pair of literary brothers, the Acominati. Michael and Nicetas Acominatus (each of whom is, from his birthplace, also called Choniates) were the sons of a well-to-do citizen of Choniae (the Colossæ of St Paul), and were sent in early youth to study at Constanti-

nople, then under Manuel Comnenus. Michael, the elder, who stood practically *in loco parentis* to his schoolboy brother, became a member of the literary and erudite circle there, of which the most famous member was Eustathius, afterwards Bishop of Thessalonica. The Commentaries of Eustathius on the poets, especially on Homer, still testify to his philological knowledge. He was at the same time a practical man and a reformer, as is shown in an interesting treatise which he wrote on monasticism. Eustathius believed in the ideal of the monastic life, as one of separation from the world and devotion to piety and learning, but was keenly alive to the abuses which frequently sheltered themselves under the monastic habit. In this view, and probably on other subjects, Michael was undoubtedly sympathetic. He was for a time inmate of the same house as Eustathius, and after the latter had been made Bishop of Thessalonica, they were constant correspondents. When Thessalonica was taken by the Normans, in 1185, Michael[1] wrote him a letter of condolence, and on the death of Eustathius, composed an oration in his honour.

Meantime, Michael himself had received ecclesiastical promotion, first, as secretary to the Patriarch Theodosius Boriodotes, and in or about 1175, as Archbishop of Athens. His letters and speeches during his time of office there throw much light on the condition of Greece proper, on the state of general culture, and on the particularly amiable character of the archbishop himself. Michael was an enthusiastic admirer of ancient Athens, and even after his painful disenchantment on arriving at the squalid

[1] Ep. 36. Lambros, vol. ii.

city of his own day, he lived more or less in the glamour of the past. It was a joy to him to occupy a house on the Acropolis, and to officiate in the Church of the Theotokos, as the Parthenon was now called,[1] to him, as he said, "a pillar of fire by day and of cloud by night." He sought to stir his flock to virtuous deeds by reminding them of their greatest ancestors. But he never forgot the present distress in the past glories. "That ancient generation," he wrote, "which loved good discourse and was subtle and wise, has passed away, and that which we now have is uncultivated, poverty-stricken in mind and body, lightly moved to migrate in search of food, like uncertain birds of passage, Thus the great city has become a great ruin." [2] He was constantly writing to persons in power (including the Emperors Isaac and Alexius III.) respecting the grievances of the Athenian people, especially the heavy taxation and the vexatious visits of imperial officials. After the fall of Constantinople, when the "tyrant" Leo Sgouros was gaining forcible possession of the country round, Michael animated the Athenians to a resistance which for a short time proved effective.[3] When, however, the forces of Boniface approached,[4] Michael thought it better to retire. No opprobrium attaches to this action, as he could have done no

[1] In one letter he speaks of it as the Church of the Divine Wisdom, but probably he is here rhetorical. Certainly the Θεότοκος Ἀθηνοτίσσα had succeeded to the place of the Virgin daughter of Zeus.

[2] Ep. 8.

[3] So we should gather from his brother's account of what happened (Nicetas, 80 *seq.*), but that is possibly to be taken with a grain of salt.

[4] See above, p. 73 *seq.*

good by remaining. As already stated,[1] he probably took part in the conferences with Cardinal Benedict at Thessalonica, but in general he lived a strictly private life on the Island of Ceos until his death about 1220. Theodore Lascaris would gladly have welcomed him to Nicæa, and he was in sincere harmony with Theodore's aims and enterprises, but physical infirmities, and possibly the fear of endangering the security of kinsfolk in Greece, kept him in his retreat.

The literary works of Michael comprise orations, homilies and private letters, of which the latter are naturally the most interesting. In his orations, as also in his official letters, he is not above the adulatory style of his race and times. It was a mere *façon de parler* to write to or of imperial personages as if they possessed the virtues of celestial luminaries or even the attributes of deity. But the adulatory phrases are with Michael mere trappings to a vigorous setting-forth of complaints.

A genuine hatred of the Latins and all their ways, and a deep melancholy in contemplating the sufferings of the Greeks, appear vividly in Michael's letters to friends and to persons in power, like Theodore Lascaris I. It is curious, and characteristic of the man and his times, that the decay of Attic Greek seems to distress him as much as more weighty evils.[2] His own style deteriorated when enforced leisure allowed him more time to decorate his epistles. But compared with some other letter-writers of his time (especially Blemmydas and Theodore Lascaris II.) he generally seems lucid or

[1] See above, p. 101.

[2] See Letter to George Bardanes in the Appendix.

even terse. His admiration for pagan antiquity may seem hardly consistent with the ideals of a Christian bishop, but in exhorting the Athenians to imitate their ancestors, he insisted that as Christians they ought to excel them in virtue. If he studied with zeal the philosophy of the old Greeks, he held that as a Christian he found the doctrine of the Stoics preferable to that of Aristotle.[1] He was a genuine scholar, and greatly distressed at the loss of many of his books in the troubles of his wanderings. His pupils and friends were active in recovering them, including Euclid's Elements. He mentions one lost book that he had copied with his own hand, suggesting thereby a school of calligraphists at Athens. Like other Greek scholars, especially such as were of delicate constitution, he was a reader of Galen, whose precepts, however, he could not easily carry out in the rough place of his exile.

It is interesting to see how Michael, though he had thrown up his own ecclesiastical post, remained on terms of friendly correspondence with some who must have made some kind of submission to the Western order. It is also to be noted that though he looked to Theodore Lascaris and to the Patriarchate at Nicæa, as pledges for the continuity of Greek life and of the Greek Church, he was on friendly terms with Theodore I. of Epirus. His letter, however, addressed to the despot, was in all probability written before Theodore had taken the Imperial title, and thus made it almost impossible to regard him with Lascaris as a joint champion of Hellenism. The most conspicuous fault of Michael is as characteristically Greek as his excel-

[1] Letter 74.

lences. He was only too conscious of his own sufferings, and a certain pardonable querulousness deprives his exile of dignity. Yet throughout his career we recognize in him all the charm of a sympathetic, cultured, and warm-hearted nature.

It seems natural to mention in connection with Michael Acominatus two at least of the learned clerics with whom he was in constant correspondence —John, Bishop of Naupactus, probably his senior, and George Bardanes, his pupil and sometime secretary, later Bishop of Corcyra.[1] These adhered, as we have seen,[2] to the rival dynasty of the Angeli of Epirus, along with the learned lawyer Demetrius Chomatenus, so that they hardly come within the literary circle of Nicæa. It seems probable, however, that at least on one occasion Bardanes was a guest at the Nicene court.

Nicetas, younger brother of Michael Acominatus, was a man of considerable learning and literary ability, as well as great industry. We have already noticed his History, which is our chief source for the events at the beginning of our period, and for the imperial Comneni and Angeli. It is, of course, written in rhetorical style, and impartiality is hardly to be expected from a man who had witnessed so many political vicissitudes. Still, Nicetas has the advantage of a historian who is familiar with his immediate subject, and his account of the city at the time of its spoliation is of great value.[3] Besides his historical

[1] For circumstances of his appointment, see above, p. 124.

[2] See above, p. 122.

[3] Ταῦτ' ἐξ ὑπεράντλου ταῖς ἀχθηδόσι ψυχῆς κενώσαντες πορευόμενοι ἐπορευόμεθα κλαίοντες καὶ βάλλοντες τοὺς θρήνους ὡς σπέρματα. Εἰ δὲ καὶ ἐρχόμενοι ἤεομεν, αἴροντες ἐν ἀγαλλιάσει τὰ τῆς δεξωτέρας ἀλλοιώσεως

and oratorical works, he wrote a Thesaurus of the Orthodox Faith with refutations of many heresies. As it gives an account of a large number that were near to his own times, it is sometimes of first-hand authority. The fact that Nicetas was a layman and his brother a cleric did not make much difference either in their education or in their way of treating their subjects. Under the sway of rhetoric, the Scriptures fared little better than the classics in loose quotation for irrelevant and decorative purposes; and in an atmosphere charged with theological conceptions and religious interpretations of life, every literary layman was bound to be a theologian, and, if he were eloquent, something of a preacher. It has already been noticed that some of the orations written by Nicetas for Theodore I. were of the character of religious homilies.[1]

But undoubtedly the most weighty person of the time, not only in his own estimation but in that of posterity, is Nicephorus Blemmydas. In his case we have the advantage of possessing, besides much of his voluminous writing on many subjects, an autobiography, or rather two autobiographies, the second meant to supplement the first, describing his career and adventures. Unfortunately, Blemmydas was afflicted with the Byzantine incapacity for putting plain facts into plain language. He had, also, attained to a degree of egoism for which it is difficult to allow in his writings. Still, they form a very useful source of information about the Lascarids

δράγματα, δῶρον τοῦτο θεοῦ, etc. This is the prevalent tone. He goes on to give interesting details.

[1] See Migne, *Patr. Gr.*, vol. 139, 140.

themselves and the conditions of life under the Nicene Empire.[1]

Nicephorus Blemmydas was born in 1197 or 1198. His father was a physician in Constantinople who, on the capture of the city, removed with all his family across the Bosporus into Bithynia. For a time they resided at Brusa, and young Nicetas went through a four-years' course of "grammar," including the study of Homer, under a well-known professor. He afterwards studied rhetoric at Nicæa. According to his own account, which is in all probability accurate, he was a very diligent pupil. In Smyrna the family were presented to the Emperor Theodore I., who was giving special attention to the promotion of education. Blemmydas seems to have had disagreements with his teacher in philosophy, and for a time deserted that subject for medicine. He learned to practise his father's art, but at the same time came near shipwreck in an unfortunate love affair. But the desire of knowledge proved stronger in him than either passion or ambition, and though he had resided for a time at Nymphæum, and might possibly have looked for support from John Vatatzes, who had recently succeeded Theodore, he preferred to make a dangerous expedition into the part of Bithynia still under the Latins, in order to obtain instruction from a certain Prodromos, a learned man living a hermit's life in the mountains. Under him, Blemmydas studied arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy. On his return to the

[1] For Blemmydas: see Migne, for his *Logic* and *Physics*. The Biographies and lesser works have been edited, prefaced by a searching account of the writer and of the particular writings, by A. Heisenberg, Leipzig, 1896. See also a long article by Kurtz, in the sixth volume of the *Byz. Zeit.*

world and the imperial court, he again had opportunities of advancement, as the Patriarch Germanus had great respect for his learning, to which Blemmydas was now adding a knowledge of Holy Scripture. But he found a monastic life more in accordance with his aspirations, and at the age of thirty he definitely assumed the monastic habit. It may be that his indifference, generally speaking, to ecclesiastical promotion was due in part to a genuine desire for learned leisure, in part to incapacity for living harmoniously with other men. His biography is full of stories of machinations against him on the part of pupils or colleagues, who are disabled and often brought to a bad end by a protecting Providence. True, Blemmydas retained the respect of some of the pupils whom John Vatatzes placed under his care, especially George Acropolita and Theodore Lascaris II., but these were singularly appreciative and intellectual men. Blemmydas refused the offer of an important bishopric from Theodore of Epirus, possibly through loyalty to the Nicene Patriarchate. There can be little doubt that he would have accepted the Patriarchate himself if either Vatatzes or Theodore II. had thought it wise to appoint him on his own conditions. His share in the theological controversy between Greeks and Latins; his sojourn in Rhodes at the time of the attack on Gabbala by the imperial forces; his opposition to Vatatzes' favourite "The Marchioness"[1]; his quarrel with Theodore and refusal to him of deathbed absolution, have been already related. When Constantinople was recovered, Blemmydas did not return to his birthplace, but remained in his

[1] See Appendix, p. 300.

monastery near Ephesus till his death about the year 1272.

From the general writings of Blemmydas, his biography, and the testimony of contemporaries, we get the impression of a severe and singularly unamiable man, inordinately vain, tactless, suspicious, and quarrelsome. But this character is relieved by a certain dogged courage in the assertion of his principles, a fixed belief that Heaven is on the side of righteousness (though this is naturally identified with *his* side), and far more, by a pure zeal for knowledge and a willingness to forego many of the good things of the world, and to risk life and limb in the cause of sound learning.

The works of Blemmydas [1] are numerous and range over many fields. The great number of manuscripts extant containing his works on Logic and Physics testifies to their wide diffusion and educational influence during the succeeding period. In theology he wrote, as he had spoken, in defence of the Greek position as to the Procession of the Holy Ghost, though the explanation and development which the doctrine received at his hands subsequently gave rise to the quite unauthorized supposition that, like some of his pupils, he finally went over to the Latin side. We have also the rules which he drew up for the monastery under his care —reasonable on the whole, but somewhat severe (thus no person, strong or weak, might ever venture to sit down in church except during the lessons [2]).

[1] Besides the edition by Heisenberg of the "Diegeseis," etc., we have most of his scientific works in Migne, vol. 142.

[2] *μήτε δὲ καθήμενός τις λεγέτω τι τῶν θείων καὶ ἱερῶν, ὥς τινες ἢ καὶ πάντας σχεδὸν τὰ λεγόμενα καθίσματα ψάλλειν εἰώθασιν ἀλλὰ πάντες πάντα λεγέτωσαν ἑστῶτες τὰ θεῖα καὶ ἱερά, μήτε καθισάτω μηδεὶς ἐκτὸς*

He wrote some laudatory poems on John Vatatzes and his deeds (in would-be classical iambics), sundry church hymns, following the rules of ecclesiastical poetry as to *hirmus* and *troparia*, and at least two little pieces in " political " verse.[1]

From Blemmydas we naturally pass to his pupil, George Acropolita, with whom, however, we have, in the course of our work, had more to deal with than with any other literary person, both as our most weighty authority for the events, and as an important actor in the scenes he describes. And certainly the student of the period, however sensible he may be of the defects of Acropolita, whether as historian or as man, must feel that he owes him a deep debt of gratitude, since it is difficult to say what kind of knowledge we should have had of the whole story if Acropolita had not taken in hand to tell it. And his history, which exactly comprises the period of the Latin occupation of Constantinople, is, with all its faults, better than many from which we obtain our knowledge of the Byzantine emperors. In style, it is simpler than that of Nicetas. The chronology is not always quite clear, but the sequence is generally logical and easy to follow. If some portions seem unduly compressed, it is just as well that Acropolita refrained from writing where his information was scanty. If he is not free from partizanship, he is able sometimes to give credit to

ἀναγνώσεως καιρὸν μηδ' ὁ πάντων γεραίτατος ἢ νοσωδεύτατος ἀλλ' ὁ μὴ δυνάμενος ἵστασθαι, γέρων ὢν ἀσθενὴς ἢ νόσῳ ταλαιπορούμενος, ἐξιὼν τοῦ ναοῦ διὰ τοῦ καθίσαι κατὰ μεγάλην βιὰν ἐπὶ μικρὸν τυγχανέτω μικρᾶς ἀνέσεως, μὴ παρὰ τῶν πολλῶν καθορώμενος.

[1] On the birth of John Lascaris (Heisenberg's edition, p. 110), also on the death of an Empress (probably Irene Lascaris), published by Prof. Bury in *Byz. Zeit.*, Band X., 1901.

a worthy opponent, like Henry of Flanders.[1] The blots upon his personal reputation are his want of fidelity to the Lascarid dynasty, and his desertion of the national cause in the question of ecclesiastical independence. But as to the former count, it may be said that Acropolita would have been a man of unusual magnanimity if he had forgotten that Theodore Lascaris had ordered him to be scourged and Michael Palæologus had caused his liberation from the prison of the Epirot prince; also that it is greatly through Acropolita himself that the Lascarids appear to us in such an attractive light. And with regard to the second charge, though Acropolita may have been guilty of tergiversation in furthering the plans of Michael Palæologus for the reunion of the Churches by the abandonment of the Greek position, yet it is possible that his views on the dogmatic question were never such as to make compromise appear as a necessarily ignoble concession.

We have already seen[2] how he began his career as one of the refugee students provided for by John Vatatzes, and how he was thereby brought under the instruction of Blemmydas. Later on, when Blemmydas withdrew from court, Acropolita succeeded to his position of tutor to young Theodore Lascaris, formerly his fellow-pupil, and probably to other young men of high birth. We have also seen how, as Great Logothete, Acropolita took part in the negotiations and in the military expeditions of John Vatatzes, and how his unfortunate misunder-

[1] ὁ δ' εἰρημένος Ἐρῆς εἰ καὶ φράγγος τὸ γένος ἐτύγχανεν, ἀλλ' οὖν τοῖς Ῥωμαίοις καὶ ἰθαγενέσι τῆς Κωνσταντίνου ἱλαρώτερον προσεφέρετο, c. 16.

[2] See above, p. 154.

standing with Theodore, and the indignity he suffered at the Emperor's hands, led to a breach in their familiar relations, though not to any fall from office. We have traced his varied fortunes while he held military command in Thrace—his capture in Prilapus by the forces of Michael Angelus II of Epirus, and his return to the imperial court some time after Michael Palæologus had obtained the supreme power. Perhaps it is as well for his reputation that he was able to act henceforth hand-in-glove with his benefactor, while remaining unsullied by the acts of perjury and the sanction of hideous crimes which had led that benefactor to his high position. Subsequently we have found Acropolita composing prayers to be recited on the occasion of the joyful entry into Constantinople, and—worst blot on his character and last event recorded in his history—his proposition that Andronicus, son of Michael, should be proclaimed joint emperor, to the exclusion of the unlucky son of Theodore Lascaris. Acropolita was afterwards put by Michael at the head of the educational institutions at Constantinople, where he seems to have done good and well-appreciated work. His part in the negotiations for uniting the Churches, and his complete surrender of the Greek cause at the Council of Lyons, belong to a later period of history. He was again fortunate in being engaged on a mission to Trebizond at the time when Michael Palæologus died and his son Andronicus began a reactionary policy against those who had favoured the late ecclesiastical concessions. He died about the year 1283. He left two sons, the elder of whom inherited his literary tastes and activities.

Besides his history, Acropolita wrote theology and poetry, especially on state occasions, and also for church use. Of his literary correspondence, which must have been considerable, very little remains.

We have a curious testimony, from a totally different source, as to the contrast between the almost brutal severity of Blemmydas and the accommodating gentleness of Acropolita. This is from their later contemporary, George of Cyprus,[1] afterwards known as the Patriarch Gregorius. George, like other literary enthusiasts of those troubled times, represents the search after knowledge under difficulties. Cyprus being under the rule of Franks (our Richard I. having conquered it in 1191, and afterwards made it over to Guy of Lusignan), he could acquire, within reach of his home, only "the shadow of Grammar."[2] It was probably taught by a Greek without national aspirations and hampered by the Latin rulers. Since George's parents did not wish him to go abroad, he ran off, embarked on a ship going to Palestine, and found his way to Asia Minor. His idea was to come to the monastery governed by Blemmydas, near to Ephesus, but on arriving in the neighbourhood, he heard such unpleasant tales of the morosity and

[1] *M. P. G.*, vol. 142, p. 19 *seq.*, with commentary by De Rubeis.

[2] Ἐντεῦθεν εἰς Ἀναιαν τῆς Ἀσίας κατάγεται (he writes of himself in the third person), δευτέρῳ πλῷ χαλεπῷ τούτῳ καὶ λίαν ἐπικινδύνῳ εἰς Ἔφεσον ἦκεν. Ἔνθα καί, ὡς ἐν γειτόνων οἰκῶν εἴη ὁ Βλεμμύδης πυθόμενος, ἀνὴρ, ὡς ἐλέγετο, οὐ μόνον Ἑλλήνων τῶν ἐφ' ἡμῶν ἀλλὰ καὶ πάντων ἀνδρῶν σοφώτατος, πολύς [ποθος] γίνεται πρὸς αὖτον κατὰ θέαν πορεύεσθαι τὴν αὐοῦ. Ἐπέσχον δὲ ὁμῶς ἄνδρες Ἐφέσιοι τῆς ὁρμῆς, εἰρηκότες, ὅπερ καὶ ἦν ἀληθὲς ὡς οὐ μόνον αὐτὸν ἀπαξιώσοι ἰδεῖν ὁ φιλόσοφος, νέον ὄντα καὶ ξένον καὶ πένητα, ἀλλὰ καὶ ὁ περὶ αὐτὸν χόρος τῶν σοφῶν μοναστηρίῳ προσπελάσαι οὐκ ἄν συγχωρήσαιεν. P. 24.

inaccessibility of the great man that he changed his mind and came to Nicæa. There, however, he was disappointed, as Acropolita had been under Theodore the Six-winged. But meantime Constantinople was reconquered, and Acropolita was put at the head of the school in the capital. George proceeded thither and found at last the very teacher he required, full of the wisdom of the old philosophers and able to communicate his own knowledge and enthusiasm to the young men who flocked to his lectures. The young Cypriote himself preferred the study of philosophy to that of rhetoric, in which he made himself expert only to avoid the ridicule of his companions. But though critical and not easy to please, he seems to have been entirely satisfied with the mental food now provided for the recaptured city. One wonders whether Blemmydas ever regretted that he had missed the chance of restoring Byzantine learning which had now fallen to his more conciliatory and courtier-like pupil.

From Blemmydas and Acropolita we naturally pass to their imperial pupil, Theodore Lascaris, whose mind they helped to form, whose affection and admiration they easily acquired, and from whom, when he rose to power, they expected many things, but obtained, along with marks of trust and confidence, severe repulses and—in the case of Acropolita—a rankling injury. The intellectual tone and aspirations of Theodore are so essential to a rational apprehension of his career and reign, that they have already[1] required some examination. Here we would consider him only in the character

[1] See above, p. 198 *seq.*

of author, though that character can hardly be separated from the rest of his peculiar personality.

We have mentioned the large treatises he wrote, possibly under the eye of Acropolita: "Six Books on the Communion (or Unity) of Nature" (λόγοι τῆς φυσικῆς κοινωνίας ἕξ). After he had become Emperor, he found time to write another book, on the most general subjects of human contemplation, and dedicated it to his friend Muzalon. The title of this work is Δηλῶσις κοσμίκη ("The Manifestation or Explanation of the Universe"),[1] and it is divided into four parts, treating in turn of the Elements, the Heavens, Life, and—the ignorance of the writer concerning all these things. This last book is not, as one might have expected, a discourse on the limitations of the human mind, but a confession on the author's part of his own inadequacy as regards knowledge of philosophy, rhetoric, and the other subjects requisite for his purpose. It is not easy to see whether he means to be taken in earnest or in irony. One suspects that he is ridiculing some of the extravagances of the learned people around him, as, in his letters, he makes fun of his physicians. The humour of that day is not much appreciated in our own, but Theodore seems to have had more than his contemporaries.

In the field of theology, Theodore produced the treatise on the Procession of the Holy Ghost, out of which we have already cited the most important

[1] It has been published by Festa in the "Giornale della Societa Asiatica Italiana," vols. xi. and xii. The learned editor has promised explanatory notes, which have, unfortunately, not yet appeared.

and original part, that dealing with the authority of the Emperor in General Councils; some hymns and homilies, and a general summary of Christian Theology, the only part of which as yet published is a treatise on the Divine Names, after the manner of Dionysius the Areopagite.[1] It lies, however, on a far lower plane than the great work which suggested it. Whereas the deep theological thinker who wrote under the name of Dionysius endeavoured to raise the mind of his readers to some symbolic apprehension of certain aspects of the Divinity by the use of helpful if inadequate descriptions, Theodore, though he had grasped the main idea of Dionysius,[2] seems to have been amusing himself by hunting up and stringing together as many names as possible which might be applied to God, without dwelling on their significance. It represents, however, the devout musings of a Christian Neo-Platonist, and Theodore always seems to have been more mystic than dogmatic in his religious conceptions. In some of his letters[3] he shows his sense of the incapacity of human nature to attain exact theological knowledge. He seems to have owed much to the writings of Dionysius, and he was acquainted

[1] Six books out of the seven are in a fifteenth century MS. in Codex 97 of the Barocchian Collection of the Bodleian Library at Oxford. They are entitled: (1) *περὶ τοῦ ὄντος*; (3) *ὅτι τὸ ἓν ἐστι τρία*; (4) *περὶ θεωνυμίας*; (5) *περὶ τῆς ἁγίας τριάδος* (the only book of the series written *before* his accession to the empire); (6) and (7) *περὶ τῆς ἐκπορεύσεως τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος*. There are mathematical diagrams to illustrate the text.

[2] *τὸν μέγαν θεὸν καὶ σεβάσιμον ἐκτῆς τῶν ἐνεργημάτων, τοῦτον θεοσημίας ὀνομάσομεν ὡσεὶ δύναμις, οὐ δεικνύντες ἐκ τῶν ὀνομάτων τὴν φύσιν, οὐχὶ κηρύττοντες ἐκ τοῦ ἀνωνύμου τὴν δύναμιν, ἀλλ' εἰπόντες τὰ ὀνόματα . . . ὡς ἀποφανόμενοι πάντα ἐν πᾶσι . . . ὄντα τον κύριον*, etc.

[3] *E.g.* 145.

with Plotinus.[1] Whereas to Blemmydas God was primarily the great disposer of events, especially those which concerned Blemmydas himself, to Theodore He appeared as the ultimate reality, the ground of all being and the source of all illumination and of all virtue.[2] True, in his application of divine honours to some of the quite ordinary people with whom he corresponded (such as the Patriarch Manuel[3]) he may seem to show an irreverent spirit. But that particular kind of adulation was fashionable among genuinely pious people (like Michael Acominatus), and should not be taken as highly significant.

Yet it was this yielding to the rhetorical style of his time, coupled with the physical weakness which hindered concentration of thought, that spoiled Theodore's claim to a high place in literature. Those of his writings which are meant to be rhetorical and nothing more are, of course, the most vapid and barren, though many of his letters (written with the consciousness that they would be read by a considerable literary circle) are equally remote from actuality. In his encomiums of his father and of Acropolita, it is hardly possible to glean more than a crumb of information about the character and deeds of either. Frederick II., if we only knew him from Theodore, would figure as a great and unappreciated monarch—nothing more. From his long-winded oration in answer to those who wished him to marry,

[1] *οὐδὲν ἄλλα ἄρα κύριον, καὶ μαλίστα ὄν, καὶ ὀντῶς ὂν ἥ ὁ θεός* (treatise *περὶ τοῦ ὄντος*. Barocc., 97).

[2] Among the "names" are: *ἡ γενικὴ πηγὴ τῶν καλῶν*; *ὁ μόνος ὑπάρχων, οὐσιωδῶς βασιλεύς*; *ὁ φωτάρχης*, etc.

[3] See Letter in Appendix.

no one would ever gather that he had had experience of matrimony, and had been left a widower with five children; Philosophy is and must be, he says, his only mistress. He indulges in word-play upon every possible occasion, and the building up of fantastic sentences seems to him an intellectual occupation. Yet we must do justice to the serious side of his nature—and possibly it may be maintained that the most hopeless and obscure of his writings belong to his earlier life.

At the time of the reconquest of Constantinople, there were some young men who had profited or were profiting by the educational efforts of the Lascarids, and ready to help restore intellectual interests in the capital. Among others, there was George of Cyprus, the appreciative pupil of Acropolita, and Manuel Holobolus,[1] who acted for a time as secretary to Michael Palæologus, was degraded and disfigured for his championship of John Lascaris, and later on was made head of the school in Constantinople as Acropolita's successor. Both of these men, and a very large number of clerics and laymen, were involved in the controversy with the Latin Church. From a philosophical and literary point of view, the dispute as to the *filioque* is not nearly so interesting as the earlier Christological and Iconoclastic controversies, though it gave scope for display of erudition and skill in analysing theological terms.

In general, a brief survey [2] of the literary activities

[1] See article on him in *Byz. Zeit.*, v., by Max Treu.

[2] Students who wish to make a more serious investigation of the literature of the time are, of course, to be safely referred to the monumental work of Krumbacher.

of the time leads to the conclusion that under the Lascarids, little was either discovered or created, but the torch was faithfully handed on. There had been a time of unusual energy under the earlier Comneni. Another wave was to come under the Palæologi, ready to further the Greek revival in Western Europe. The second renaissance could only follow the former on condition that intellectual life should be kept up in the interim.

As it was with literature, so, we may say, was the case with art, though here we need to be cautious, firstly, because of the paucity of any remains, owing to the excessive depredations of wars and migrations, that may safely be assigned to this period; and secondly, because the whole field of Byzantine art has not yet been surveyed by experts, and is encumbered with rival theories as to action and reaction of East and West. But a few leading lines may safely be laid down.

From what we know of the Lascarid princes generally, we should suppose that they would show an interest in architecture and painting as in literature, and this we find to have been the case. Nicæa, their capital, contained, as we have seen, some excellent mosaics of the ninth and eleventh centuries, and these might well provide models as well as inspiration to those who dwelt in or visited the city. Of the visible and tangible work of the Lascarids in Nicæa, except in the rebuilding of part of the wall, we have no evidence. We read, however, that the delegates from Rome, who came to Nicæa in 1234, to discuss terms of union,[1] saw some paintings on a wall representing the Fathers of the

[1] See above, p. 166.

First Council. The traveller in those regions at the present day sees in a church which claims (though the claim is more than doubtful) to be the scene of that council,[1] two very poor pictures, but the later much poorer than the earlier, delineating the same persons. The question arises whether there might not have been an earlier picture than those extant, which stands to the first of those now visible in the same relation in which it stands to the second ; and whether this earliest picture may not have been set up by Theodore I. or John Vatatzes with a view to glorifying the place their city had taken in the triumph of orthodoxy. This, of course, is mere conjecture, but we have testimony to the zeal and care which Vatatzes showed in decorating the interior of the church connected with his monastic foundation at Sosandra. This testimony is furnished in the second of the poems written by Blemmydas in honour of Sosandra.[2] Of course it is not in accordance with the style of Blemmydas to descend to descriptions of frescoes, but any reader who has visited Byzantine churches can imagine, from his allusions, the character of the scheme of painting. In all probability it presented a figure of Christ enthroned, with the Emperor presenting to Him a model of the church, and on the walls a series of pictures illustrating the lives of Old Testament worthies. Sosandra, if only it could be recovered, would probably form a link between the mosaics and frescoes of the eleventh and those of the

[1] In the opening discourse of the Patriarch Germanus, the title says that it was delivered in the Church of the 318 Holy Fathers (MS. Baroc., 131).

[2] Blemmydas, ed. Heisenberg, p. 115 *seq.* See below, p. 302.

fourteenth century, as represented in the one church of Constantinople which, by some unknown and lucky accident, escaped to a certain extent the destruction which the Turkish conquest brought upon almost all ecclesiastical interiors, the church of the Chora—better known as the Karieh Djami.

The mosaics and frescoes of this very remarkable church have of late received considerable attention.[1] The church dates from an early time, was reconstructed, after an earthquake, by Justinian, and again renewed and beautified, after another time of desolation, by Maria Ducas, the mother-in-law of Alexius Comnenus I. Like other churches, however, it suffered much at the hands of the Crusaders, and seems to have undergone an almost complete redecoration in the reign of Andronicus Palæologus by the munificence of the logothete and scholar, Theodore Metiochites. The question as to how much of the extant work was carried out by Metiochites and how much by his predecessors has not yet been placed beyond dispute, but some parts which were undoubtedly his (especially the mosaic on which the founder is seen presenting his church to Christ) show considerable power, and a good case has been made out for the fourteenth century origin of the wealth of illustration of Gospel (including the Apocryphal) and Old Testament story on the walls. In spite of defects in drawing, there is in these works a skill in composition, a care for detail, and a freshness and vigour in treatment

[1] A very fine illustrated book about these has appeared in Russian (Schmitt). Diehl, besides his account of them in his "Histoire de l'art Byzantin," has written a very interesting article on them in his "Études Byzantins" (1905).

which seems to justify those who speak of a revival of mural art under the early Palæologi. Metiochites had himself come from Nicæa, where his birth about coincided with the recovery of Constantinople, and both he and the artists he employed were familiar with Nicene models.

In another and as yet little explored quarter, we have at least one monument dating from a period very little later than that with which we have been concerned, and closely associated with the Lascarid dynasty. About four miles from Sofia, the present capital of Bulgaria, and the ancient Sardica, stands the little church of Boyana. It is small, ill-kept, and very dark, but the visitor, by means of a taper, can discern some remarkable frescoes [1] on the wall, representing the founder of the church, who held the office of Sebastocrator to Constantine Toichos,[2] with the church in his hands; his wife, like himself, in rich Byzantine costume; opposite, King Toichos and his queen, Irene Lascaris, the daughter of Theodore II. This lady and her husband are, I think, the only persons mentioned in our history of whom we have any kind of portrait. The walls of the church are covered with scenes chiefly from Bible history, which probably belong to different periods, but which in subject and purpose resemble the other mural designs already mentioned.

There is, of course, no reason to suppose that the artists of Boyana were brought by Irene Lascaris

[1] These have been published with a dissertation in Bulgarian by Mr Balastcheff, whom I have to thank for allowing me to reproduce them here on p. 230 and Frontispiece.

[2] See above, p. 230.

THE SEBASTOCRATOR KALOYAN, FOUNDER OF BOYANA, AND DESPINA HIS WIFE

from Nicæa. Bulgaria was open to Byzantine influences, artistic and other, from many sides. But in all probability they belonged to the same schools which had furnished artificers for the foundations of John Vatatzes. The workmanship is not strong, but the decorative effect is good and the portraiture seems fairly successful. No doubt the works of the Lascarids in Asia were similar in style but better in execution.

It would thus seem that in art, as in letters, the Greek mind and spirit, under the Lascarids, held its own, and thus helped to keep alive something of the old Hellenic and the Græco-Christian spirit till the day came for its further expansion, especially in Western lands. Some writers on literature and art have attributed all that seemed worthy in the last phase of Greek productiveness to vivifying influences from the West, especially from Italy. But this view is associated with the theory that all Byzantine history represents a steady decline, a theory which a sounder study of facts has considerably weakened.

The warriors, the statesmen, the men of letters, even the artists who belong to the period of the Empire in Exile, if they cannot bear comparison with those of a definitely progressive age, were able to accomplish something because they had what may be regarded as the greatest source of strength to an individual or a nation—faith in their special vocation. There is a certain unity of character and purpose about them, in that their intellectual and political labours were penetrated by their religious ideas, and their religion, for better and for worse, was profoundly affected by national feeling and by

intellectual aspiration. Their efforts postponed the evil day when the fairest Greek lands should fall under Asiatic rule, but they did much more, in that they kept alive the fire of Hellenic culture till the world in general was ripe to receive its genial and reviving influences.

APPENDIX

ILLUSTRATIVE EXTRACTS

I

From MICHAEL ACOMINATUS, EX-ARCHBISHOP OF ATHENS

(1) *Reproof to a pupil for using new-fangled expressions*

To GEORGE BARDANES (Letter 143 in Lampros' edition, p. 288)

IN congratulating myself on your compositions, my dear son in mind and spirit, I do not look on them as what you call them, "childish babblings," but as youthful utterances which already show some grace of style and which give hope in the near future of an accomplished literary man. And herein you may test the sincerity of my judgment: parents do not reprove their children as infantile, or chastise them when they lisp indistinctly, or when, in their babblings, they use incorrect or even vulgar expressions. But I am so far from overlooking, in your letters to me, any lapses from correctness which, either from want of care or of knowledge, you may have committed, that, as you see, I scold you as a schoolmaster would, when you—a grown-up lad—occasionally fall into incorrectness or inaccuracy. Thus, in your first letter you write: λόγοις ἐπιμήκοις; the correct form of the word is not ἐπιμήκος but ἐπιμήκης, and the dative plural ἐπιμήκεσιν; in the same letter you put the active form δεδίττειν for δεδίττεσθαι. You repeat this

mistake in your second letter, whether from carelessness or ignorance I cannot say. But you must not suppose that because a good many passive forms have, following Attic usage, been changed to active, δεδίττεσθαι is among them; for in this way the ancients have written it, and a thousand other verbs, such as μορμολύττεσθαι.

Now if you take this reproof with your usual good sense and affection for me, it will show you clearly that I do not feel amused by your letters as childish efforts, but look on them rather as if they were fragments of a statue of a great and wise man, and that when I do praise them, it is without any flattery. For while many have made various distinctions between the friend and the flatterer —as you will see by turning over the works of the ancients—the clearest difference made between those who really love and those whose affection is feigned is that real friends praise their friend's works and doings when they are worthy of admiration, and blame with a view to correction whenever they are somewhat of a failure; while flatterers praise everything done by the flattered, whether it be wretched or excellent. And this distinction is a true one.

(2) *On the Empire and the Patriarchate.* (Lampros, Letter 171, p. 336)

To the Lord Patriarch Manuel

Most reverend and learned Sir,—Blessed be God who in His wrath has had mercy upon us, in that He has given us to drink of the wine of stupefaction but not to drain the cup to the lowest dregs. For in His anger He has delivered up to the aliens the Queen of Cities, blessed and consecrated by royal and priestly unction, but has not yet allowed the strongholds of that unction to be trodden down by the Gentiles and made of no effect, but in His mercy hath left us a royal seed and a priestly

torch, that we might not be utterly destroyed like the Pentapolis [1]—renowned both for its wickedness and for its destruction. And now, if we are thrust forth from the glorious City and from its regal and sacred buildings, we can still make boast of a glorious monarch and an exalted high-priest—as many of us as have escaped from the Italian tyranny. But the strange and marvellous thing is that many of us who have been under the tyrants are being drawn into your presence, having beheld from afar the Emperor, encouraged by a thousand trophies, and your Holiness resplendent in effulgence of wisdom and virtue—as brilliant as if neither of you had left his ancient sphere of glory.

So comes it that our pupil and secretary,[2] now that we as a lamp thrust from its lampstand, have been extinguished, has, by our advice hastened towards the glorious light of your Illustrious Holiness, finding it impossible to live any longer in the Italian smoke and darkness. He has preferred to hazard himself in the tents illumined and liberated by your Holiness rather than to abide at home, in the servile semblance of what was once the noblest of cities. Wherefore, I entreat your most honoured Holiness not to disappoint his hope, especially as he is a man not without merit nor unfit for the task laid upon him—one which needs caution and confidence. May God be merciful to me through the prayers of your Holiness.

[1] *I.e.* Sodom and the other Cities of the Plain. See Book of Wisdom, x. 6.

[2] Probably George Bardanes, afterwards Bishop of Corcyra, to whom the former letter was written.

II

From Nicephorus Blemmydas

(1) *His encounter with the Marchioness.* (See p. 170.) (*From* Διήγησις Μερικὴ, xli., pp. 39, 40, in Heisenberg's edition)

I [1] was dwelling again in the monastery of [St Gregory] the Wonder-worker, in peace and quiet, attending to those studies in which I had been bred up and to which I had devoted myself. And once more the Enemy stirred up danger and strife against me. For the Rival of the Empress—and a more prominent person in every way—forced her way, without any anticipation on my part, into the church of the monastery, with a large escort, making much disturbance, and approached the place where the divine mysteries were being celebrated. And I, struck with astonishment by such an unwonted appearance, unable to proceed further, prevented her from hearing the divine word, by arranging that the celebrant should stand still before the altar, neither moving nor speaking. And she, after standing for a time, discerning the prohibition, began to cry out and to weep, and took her departure with many groans and tears. But some of her escort, with their leader, Drimus (rightly called "Fierce"), remained behind, complaining and raging against our procedure. Drimus, declaring that I was not worthy to exist in the world, seized his dagger from his belt, and would have drawn it—but it would not be drawn. I supposed it was in order to terrify me—but his object was murder. And when the dagger would not obey him, he boiled over with wrath and began to rage, until I departed from among them, when they also went out. And the miracle was made

[1] Blemmydas uses the first person plural throughout. But though the pomposity of his style might be preserved by its retention, I have, for clearness' sake, preferred the singular.

evident by the assassin himself who had experienced it, since in telling the story in the Palace he twisted the truth to slander, and defamed my character, attributing the retention of the dagger in the sheath to charms and magical arts, used by those against whom it was being drawn. Whence I discerned clearly that what he had been doing was no mere threat, but a real attempt at

ERRATA

P. 300, ll. 26 *and* 29, *for* dagger *read* sword.

P. 301, l. 4, „ „

„ l. 9 *et seq.*, *after* Preserver *delete* And . . . Almighty, *and read* But when the infliction of a reprimand upon so exalted a lady, whose very name inspired terror, was interpreted as insolence and contempt of authority,

P. 302, l. 34, *for* Thy *read* his.

„ *in footnote, after* φερωνυμοῦντα, *put* in allusion to the original meaning of the name John = Grace.

out the thoroughly Byzantine character of this adulation of the Emperor on the part of the man who shut the Emperor's mistress out of church. The metre is iambic, but I render it in the ordinary English equivalent for iambics, blank verse, though of course that involves cutting off a foot from each line.

Aright, thy task entire shall be achieved.
For he, our glorious Emperor, in himself
Displays the form of virtue all complete,
Unmixed and beauteous. All things good and bright
Adorn his soul in excellence and power.
As when a man, following the painter's craft,
Hath lit upon some form surpassing fair,
Nobler than others both in hue and shape,
As in proportion due of part to part,
He leaves it not, but draws, that he may have
An archetypal image of the best,
While other pictures giving partial views
Of fragmentary beauty—not the whole—
He scorns and passes by ;—so he that seeks
The beauty of pure virtue, which excels
All else and rules o'er all,—to know it well
And paint it with the colour of fair speech,—
Let him pass by the pageants oft bepraised
And shows beheld afar, and fix his gaze
On this one Figure, learn its beauty well
Of every gracious attribute compact.
The Primal Artist, having well prepared,
With skill supreme, his colours manifold,
Blending whatever shares in Beauty's Form,
Hath on the royal soul disposed it all,
As on a clear, fair tablet ; in itself
That soul susceptive of the whole design,
Yielding obedient to the Painter's hand.
Artificer of Nature ! Thou alone
Hast formed our glorious King ; and Thou alone
Hast made him fair to look on ; Thou alone
Hast glorified and magnified his name.
He is the tabernacle of Thy praise,
A living temple, meet to bear thy name,[1]
Full of all graces. He to Thee in turn

[1] φερωνυμοῦντα, ambiguous. Was Blemmydas thinking of the title "Merciful" given to Vatatzes, or did not that come till after his death? Of course, the Church itself was named from an attribute of the Saviour.

Offers this temple, large and fair to see,
He as a King to Thee the King of all,
Alone to Thee alone. Others than Thee
He holds not his superiors. Thee as Lord
He hails with voice distinct—He ruler sole
But Thou the ruler sole of all that is.
For in Thy hand his heart Thou keepest sure,
From Thy right hand he holds his mighty power,
Thy right hand gives him victory and renown,
'Tis Thy right hand hath quelled his barbarous foes
And may that hand destroy them utterly
Like Amalek. Behold where Moses stands
Thy saint acknowledged first ; meekly to Thee
The meek lifts up his hands. O lend him aid !
The tent hath Moses in the desert pitched,
Here stands the Ark—and there the Tables Twain ;
Behold around the people purified,
Sprinkled with tears for water—such as purge
Beyond the power of hyssop, better far
Than heifer's ashes for impurity,
Freed from all contact with the deadly thing,
Their soul's fair garments washed from every stain.[1]
Come to the Ark, ye people, haste to come,
Pour forth your prayers, and pay with all your heart
The service due to Him who rules o'er all.
But be advised—and dread the Tables Twain.
O break them not ! The sword of vengeance see
Ready at hand to cut transgressors off.
No man of these shall see the happy land,
But he shall find another sword without
Burning and driving sinners to the fire
The flames of Hell, beyond all power to quench.
Oh thou that fliest from the vengeful flame
Harboured within five lustful cities' walls,

[1] This portion of the poem suggests, as above noted (p. 292), that Blemmydas was thinking of the frescoes of Sosandra—possibly a portrait of the Emperor and various scenes from Scripture history.

Secure in towers of wickedness.—Away,
Delay not—see, the angel of the Lord
A place of safety hath appointed thee,
A life of peace, a time relieved from care.
What need to wander and to course the hills ?
Thou fliest from destruction brought on sin ;
Behold the Ark, and two-fold help ; run on,
Refresh the soul and body—linger not.[1]
Art thou Elijah ? See Thy Carmel here,
And Horeb nigh, the Revelation Mount.
The Baptist Thou ? A dwelling far remote,
Unsought yet ready for the seeking soul
Awaits thee here—to halt in, if thou wilt—
Or place of preaching ; this monastic house
Which bears the name of Him who saves the World.
And thou, King Abraham, of many a race
The Father—whom the faithful Scythians own,
The multitude unnumbered, whom thy hand
Parental from the darksome West has brought
To Eastern sunlight. Here agree in one
Both Sarah's sons and Hagar's servile stock.
Thy tent is pitched, and angels feast within,
Though free from fleshly trammels, thou their host.
In other places too thy tents are spread,
To tend the suffering sick and travel-stained.[2]
For God, who all things saw before they were,
Prepared the crown of hospitality
For thee, a meeting-place of all delights,
To see thy Seed, to own a hopeful branch
Sprung from a sacred root—its blossom rich
But richer far the fruit, of holy fame.
For thou, O Emperor, hast thine Isaac too,
Thy virtue's image, beauteous in his life,
In very truth, the gift[3] of God to thee,
And God hath said of him : " he pleaseth me."

[1] Here we imagine a picture of Lot and his family.
[2] An allusion to the charitable foundations of John Vatatzes.
[3] An allusion to the name *Theodore*.

So mayest thou reach the days of glorious eld,
And then departing to the realms above,
Leave in thy place thine offspring as thine heir,
To rule the Empire through unnumbered days.

III

Theodore Lascaris

(1) *Letter to the Patriarch Manuel.* Festa, 101

(This letter illustrates Theodore's characteristic way of bringing theological and philosophical considerations into the treatment of ordinary matters, and his various fashions of regarding himself and other men as types rather than as individuals.)

Most Revered Lord and Universal Patriarch

That time has gone by, and I have not sent any letter to my Father, I acknowledge, and acknowledge against myself entirely, desiring by this letter to make up—in the eyes of the world—for my want of respect. But at the same time I would assert in all confidence in the Lord, that whether I write or not, I am not far removed from your Holiness. For if, owing to the distance between us, the body fails to pay its debt, the vision of the mind extends as far; and if the hand is sometimes slow to write, the heart reaches out to the tenderly desired friend. For there is no such tenderness as between father and son, in mutual continuous desire each for each. For our friendship has been built up according to a scheme, having its primary relation to ourselves, but ultimately subsisting in One afar off and yet near, the Son of God. For in Him is our friendship and union, He being our bond of unity. For the Priesthood and the Empire, as it seems to me, are sisters, linked together like soul and body. The one is akin to the divine—the other is material. But reason is their supervisor and leader, as the Supreme Reason and what pertains thereto, Word and Spirit, exercising their functions—creative and controlling—not by nature, as it is with reason in general,

but because they hold the supremacy over all that depends upon them. For it is all one to say *what depends on them* and to say *all things*, since all things depend on them, and are derived from them. If, then, these things are as we have said, and if we continue in the love of the Son of God, it may be said that our friendship has been built up high above that of any friends whose affection is of a material kind. Wherefore correspondence or cessation of correspondence cannot affect its reality, an attribute which it possesses and is naturally incapable of alienating; it is as "founded upon the Rock, Christ," to Whom having committed all my powers of body and soul, from childhood up, I am preserved unto this day, being confident that the same protection will be ever vouchsafed to me by the piety of your intercessions on my behalf, my most admirable of friends, revered master, example of the most exalted virtue.

(2) Theodore Lascaris to Andronicus, Bishop of Sardis (*who had, apparently, been complimenting him on some of his writings*)

Letter 124 (Festa, p. 173)

It often happens that many people have admired the non-existent. But in admiring the non-existent, they admired what really existed. But those who have admired the really existent have not admired the non-existent, since they admired what really was there. Very favourable opinions have been expressed: the arrangement logical, the argument convincing, the object laudable, and to all educated people "the reasonableness of it makes it easily intelligible." But you, honoured Sir, do not, I pray, admire my productions for what is due to Philosophy, but admire the fountain-head from which all streams of wisdom flow. For it is to her that all admiration appertains. If you would refer back to my writings you would again admire her on that score. For she has produced and inspired my work. But as to

all my works, whether you admire them or overrate them, in virtue of their general intention, a grateful return will be made to you in the shape of more works of mine, and our grateful regard you shall ever possess in the highest measure.

(3) Theodore Lascaris to Muzalon (Letter 193 in Festa, p. 239)

Many persons admire your friend, especially such as regard material things, since he has turned from the light to the ponderous, and has changed the immaterial for the turgid. Which thing seems admirable to those whom I would call admirable people. But those of a different kind are estranged by ill-placed admiration. For with me, gold has usurped the place of reason, the brightness of precious stones that of the beauty of eloquence, the roundness and sheen of pearls that of conversions and subtleties of the syllogism ; the types of forms and their varieties have been expelled by the variety of pleasures which are always showered upon monarchs. Instead of harmony and numbers, I have to do with the account-books in which the clerks mark the tale of golden coins, instead of the movements of the stars, their ascendencies and culminations which rain influence and mark destinies, I attend to the opinions and phrases and speeches of the multitude and their fancies, so that all the world resounds with irrational hubbub, louder than the pneumatic music of Heron.[1] What does it all come to ? You, as a cultivated man, may be amused at this, you, who have a firm hold of philosophy, and share in her wealth. Laugh then in good health at all this folly, and when you have laughed your fill come, in good health, to see me, my child Muzalon, bound to me in a strong and indissoluble bond.

[1] Heron was a Ptolemaic scientist who discovered some of the properties of compressed air, and all but invented the steam engine.

IV

Eirenicos

From Nicolaus Eirenicos on the marriage of John Vatatzes and Constantia, daughter of Frederick II. (Political Verse)

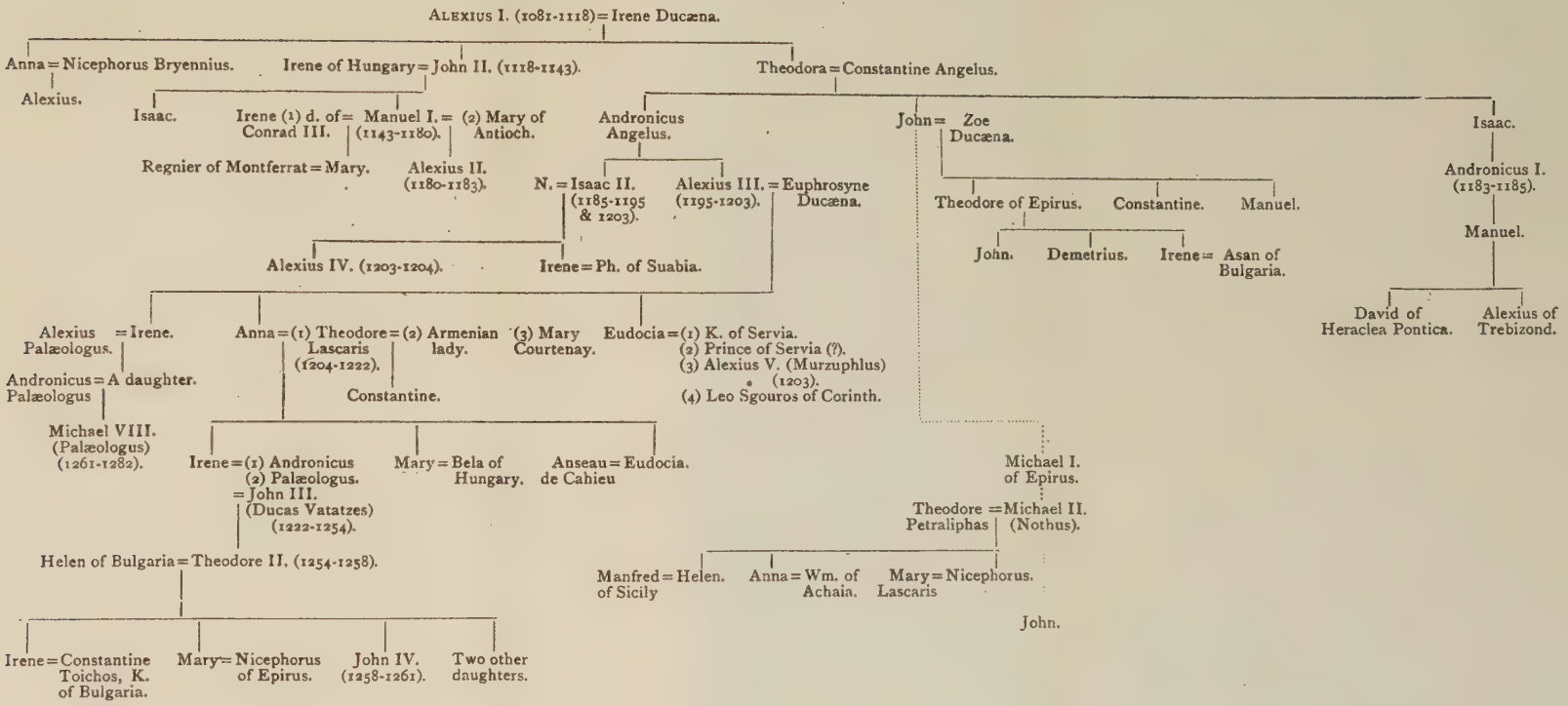
(The fragment cited by Schlumberger[1] may be roughly translated thus :)

Around the lovely cypress-tree, the ivy gently windeth ;
The Empress is the cypress-tree, my Emperor is the ivy.
Here in the world's wide garden-ground, he reaches from the centre,
His tendrils softly compassing the plenteous trees and herbage,
And holds them flourishing and fair, and crowns them with his glory.
The trees he grasps are cities great and lands and peoples many.
Around the lovely cypress-tree, the ivy gently windeth,
The Empress is the cypress-tree, my Emperor is the ivy.

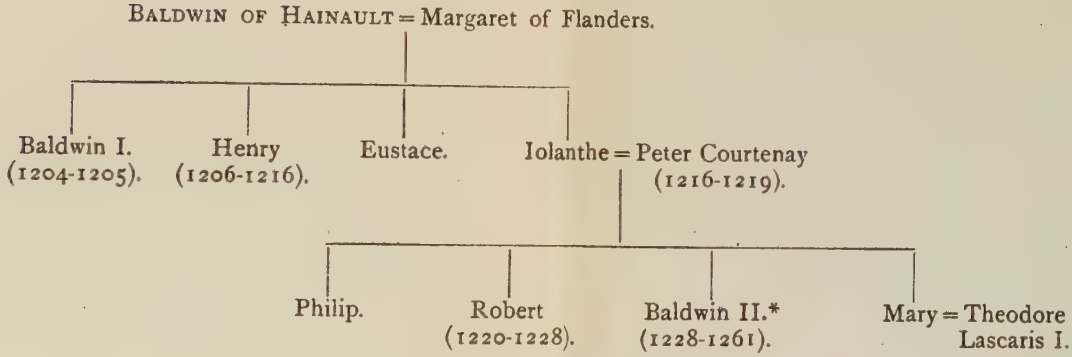
[1] Above, p. 169.

FINIS

GENEALOGICAL TREE OF COMNENI, ANGELI, AND LASCARES


Alexius I. (1081-1118) = Irene Ducæna.
Anna = Nicephorus Bryennius.
Alexius.
Irene of Hungary = John II. (1118-1143).
Isaac.
Irene (1) d. of Conrad III. = Manuel I. (1143-1180). = (2) Mary of Antioch.
Regnier of Montferrat = Mary.
Alexius II. (1180-1183).
Theodora = Constantine Angelus.
Andronicus Angelus.
N. = Isaac II. (1185-1195 & 1203).
Alexius III. (1195-1203). = Euphrosyne Ducæna.
Alexius IV. (1203-1204).
Irene = Ph. of Suabia.
John = Zoe Ducæna.
Theodore of Epirus.
Constantine.
Manuel.
John.
Demetrius.
Irene = Asan of Bulgaria.
Isaac.
Andronicus I. (1183-1185).
Manuel.
David of Heraclea Pontica.
Alexius of Trebizond.
Alexius Palæologus. = Irene.
Andronicus = A daughter. Palæologus
Michael VIII. (Palæologus) (1261-1282).
Anna = (1) Theodore Lascaris (1204-1222). = (2) Armenian lady. = (3) Mary Courtenay.
Constantine.
Eudocia = (1) K. of Servia. (2) Prince of Servia (?). (3) Alexius V. (Murzuphlus) (1203). (4) Leo Sgouros of Corinth.
Irene = (1) Andronicus (2) Palæologus. = John III. (Ducas Vatatzes) (1222-1254).
Mary = Bela of Hungary.
Anseau = Eudocia. de Cahieu
Helen of Bulgaria = Theodore II. (1254-1258).
Irene = Constantine Toichos, K. of Bulgaria.
Mary = Nicephorus of Epirus.
John IV. (1258-1261).
Two other daughters.
Michael I. of Epirus.
Theodore Petraliphas = Michael II. (Nothus).
Manfred = Helen. of Sicily
Anna = Wm. of Achaia.
Mary = Nicephorus. Lascaris
John.

LATIN EMPERORS OF ROMANIA OF CONSTANTINOPLE



* With whom John de Brienne ruled conjointly (1231-1237).

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